TELOS

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THE CRISIS OF THE LEFT AND NEW SOCIAL IDENTITIES*

by Federico Stame

To ask about the nature of a concept of the Left is to recognize the radical crisis that the Left has been in for more than a century. During this time the labor movement has gone through crises and defeats, but only now we are beginning to realize that it is not so much a crisis or a defeat but a general process of dissolution of fundamental notions which constituted the Left's identity. It is no longer clear what it means to be on the Left, or what consequences it has for political economy, social policy and civil rights.

The question is whether this crisis is a weakening of the ability to comprehend the present, or whether it is a social transformation that has produced the dissolution — or, at least, the profound modification — of social conflicts, rendering obsolete that vision of society emphasizing struggles between major social groups, and based on the belief that there is a profound descrepancy between the social order as it is presently constituted and how it could be through a more rational and *collectively* informed approach. I am inclined to accept the less radical hypothesis according to which contemporary societies still exhibit inequality, injustice, and a different distribution of power, so as to render historically plausible a principle of *collective political action* based on the *solidarity* of disadvantaged groups. In this context, the Left means the mode of *acting together* of such groups. This choice is based on the conviction that in contemporary societies: a) social antagonisms are related to collective goals; b) some collective goals are more just, i.e., more desirable, than others; c) those more desirable goals are generally connected to the action of subordinate groups; d) all societies known to us, past and present, are based on a unequal distribution of power and wealth.

Thus, to ask "What is the Left today?" seems rethorical and banal, since it would be sufficient to reply that the Left is every political stance that fights for progress, for a democratization of decision-making, for increased spheres of freedom and self-determination, and for a more egalitarian income distribution and life-styles.

Yet, it is becoming clear within the Left that these criteria are no longer sufficient to characterize a "Left" position. We no longer believe in progress understood as a linear and necessary process toward more advanced and modern societies. The democratization of decision-making through decentralized participation has not resulted in a true democratization, in the sense of greater transparency and accessibility to decision-making mechanisms.

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The spheres of freedom and self-determination are shrinking before the apparent inevitability of an authoritarian involution of late capitalist societies. State intervention mechanisms seeking a more progessive distribution of income and full employment, are today blocked or challanged by what has been described as "the fiscal crisis of the state."

Today there is a fundamental crisis in the conception of democracy as *popular sovereignty* (to use a classical definition of political thought) — a conception that sees the problem of social organization of social order in terms of the *origin* and *quality* of power. In this sense, every political rule that draws its legitimacy from a *direct* or *delegated* exercise of power by the people or in the name of the people is democratic. This tradition of political thought is over two thousand years old: it goes from the Athenian democracy of Pericles to the medieval formulations of popular sovereignty in terms of "*lex regia de imperio*", from the political experiences connected to medieval radical heresies to Marsilio of Padua. Nonetheless, its most radical formulation, and the one most important for modern political consciousness, is without doubt that of Rousseau's "Social Contract". It is crucial for two reasons: 1) because of its radical formulation of the principle of the overcoming of *political alienation.* The juridical fiction consisted in the total alienation of individual rights and in their transformation into political rights. The crucial consequence, however, was the identification of the General Will with the will of all, which meant the total rejection of the problem of the freedom of the individual as a problem for political philosophy, since freedom reduces now to obedience to the General Will. With Rouseau and subsequent social and political radicalism, democracy becomes *totalitarian democracy.* The liberal themes of the control of power, of the safeguard of the spheres of liberty of the individual, of the separation of powers within the state, etc., become themes bound to the world view of the old social and political groups and thus cease to be "progressive." 2) the second reason is the almost complete incorporation of such a vision in the theoretical tradition that for more than a century has been identitified with the Left: Marxism. This has to do with the conception of freedom and social order that from Rousseau, and through Hegel, enters into Marxism and ends up in the classical definition of Engels, where freedom becomes the *recognition of necessity.* Marxism's distinctive contribution to this tradition is the materialist basis on which the overcoming of alienation is grounded. Such alienation, representing the separate nature of power, is seen as rooted in a socio-historical formation destined to be overcome by a superior and nonantagonistic social formation in which the problem of power, as a specific *political* problem, is doomed to disappear. To be sure, there might be the so-called "phase of transition." But precisely because it is a transitional phase, it is allowed to be exceptional, i.e., outside of the rules of the game. The Jacobins systematically introduced for the first time the practice of terror as something inextricably linked to this transition — in this respect the Bolsheviks did not introduce anything new.

The crisis of this theoretical tradition has had serious consequences for the

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Left's political identity. The recognition of a strict correlation between historical development and a "theodicy of freedom" is the faith in a scheme which in a linear and objective fashion brings about a transition from an antagonistic socio-historical formation to a non-antagonistic one. This is expressed by the concept of "the transition". Since the change from a socio-historical formation to another cannot be peaceful or painless (the revolution is not a cocktail party) the problem of the transition is tied to the acknowledgement of the necessity of an exceptional phase in the political struggle — a phase considered acceptable insofar as it leads necessarily to a superior society and is limited in duration. This conception is as much the product of a determinist view of historical development as it is of a chiliastic concept of historical time. Now that the crisis has engulfed the core of the Left's self-understanding, one can realize the shock that the loss of credibility in the concept of the transition has had for the identity of the Left. This is due primarily to the fact that the crisis has to do with a conception of political struggle which had never bothered with such concepts as the *limits* of political action and the *rules* of the game. At any rate, a conceptual transformation is necessitated by the emergence of doctrines of political action which postulate the end of antagonistic society, of class-divided society. In marxist terms: the end of pre-history.

Now, a totalizing concept of political struggle emerged with the French Revolution and the Jacobins. Julian Freund has pointed out that a profound change in political categories took place during the French Revolution. These categories were formed in terms of the antithesis friend-foe, and the purpose of political theory and philosophy was to limit such antithesis so that it would not be destinctive for society as a whole and would not allow for the total destruction of the enemy. Political struggle would therefore end in the defeat but not in the destruction of the enemy. The main assumptions are therefore: a) that the antithesis friend-foe, the existence of conflict, must be considered essential to politics, i.e., not to be done away by means of politics; b) enmity is therefore constitutive of human society, which means that the identification of the enemy must not be identified by means of *guilt*. If we grant these assumptions, the enemy can coexist with a limited — and therefore juridically defined — political struggle; if they are side-stepped and the enemy is identified by means of *guilt*, then there are no longer any *limits* to political action, since those guilty must be eliminated.

The change brought about by Jacobinism and communism consists precisely in the rejection of these two assumptions in favor of a concept of politics as a struggle for the indentification and elimination of the guilty. As Freund has argued: " . . . for the last two centuries, after the French Revolution, politics is exercised in the name of one of these ideologies which, with the pretext of suppressing political enemies in the name of a concept deemed more humane, devalues enmity and makes it more cruel, since it is concerned with the search for the guilty."[1] Robespierre, in his speech "On the Principles of Political Morals that Must Guide the Convention in the Internal Administra-

1. Julian Freund, *L'essence du Politique* (Paris, 1978), p. 499.

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tion of the Republic," said: "In a word, we want to fulfill the wishes of nature, carry out the destiny of humanity, uphold the promise of philosophy, absolve providence of the long reign of crime and tyranny."[2]

The result is a totalizing concept of conflict which grounds the criteria and legitimites the means of Left political action. Although the transformation of conflict and struggle into an absolute antagonism is a peculiar phenomenon of modern mass society, no doctrine is more closely tied to this transformation than Jacobinism and later communism. In this respect, these doctrines represent the authentic political vision of modernity.

The present crisis is rooted in the questioning of the eschatological visions sustaining the morality of a totalizing politics. Faced with the crisis of the idea of the transition to communism, Left political theory finds itself deprived of a specific mode of political action. The idea of total struggle no longer holds. But the return to the themes of limited conflict, the acknowledgement of the essential character of social conflict, introduces once again the theorems of political democracy, of limited government, of the balance of powers — theorems extraneous to the Jacobin-communist political tradition — with the result that the latter experiences a break between the *values* of action and its *techniques* — a break which translates in the indeterminacy of the relation between socialism and democracy now reduced to a "*petitio principii*".

The first and main expression of the crisis in the concept of the Left is the crisis of "actually existing socialism" understood as the general crisis of the historical model of socialism. The significance of the collapse of such model has to do with the Left's ability during the past sixty years to identify a historico-theoretical vision with a *real movement*, thus realizing, even if in a distorted and limited way, Marx's claim about communism being the *real movement* towards the abolishment of the existing order. This identification has been crucial for the Left's identity, and has been an exceptional instrument of political integration and theoretical cohesion.

A second element may be found in the crisis of the State in late capitalist societies. There is a crisis in the mechanisms through which the state creates consensus and legitimation; and there is a crisis in the institutional and political mechanisms that allow a political exchange functional to such forms of state intervention. In other words, the crisis of the interventionist state happens to coincide with the crisis of the forms of political organization that had been based on the experience of the interventionist state. What enters into crisis is therefore a concept of democracy based on the primacy of larger institutions (parties and trade unions) in the formulation and selection of political demands — a concept of democracy as participation mediated by institutions. Thus, it is a crisis of the concept of freedom (or liberation) viewed in terms of a gradual and continuous process of *socialization of life-domains*, based on the identification of socialization with liberation.

What is being challenged for the first time is thus the principle of *totalitarian-Jacobin* democracy, the principle that the process of democratization, of the

2. Maximilian Robespierre, *Texte choisis* (Paris, 1958), vol. III, p. 113.

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progressive and linear overcoming of the roots of alienation, is achieved by the progressive expansion of the public sphere. The fundamental principle of collectivist democracy is in fact the idea that the subject realizes himself fully only by means of progressively making public its life-domains, insofar as only in the public sphere, i.e., in *society*, can the principle of subjectivity be fully realized. Now, in the modern view of the relation between the individual and society (predominant since the 18th century) the tense relation between the individual and society (central to 17th century political philosophies grounding the modern anthropology of the subject) is progressively resolved in favor of the second term. As long as there was the natural law tradition, there was a conflict between the theory of natural rights and the organicist theory of the state and of social organization: there was an opposition between a theory that saw the subject as primary *vis-à-vis* the foundation of the state and therefore saw the latter as a product of the former, and the tradition that viewed the state ontologically primary and subject with his rights as a product, i.e., as derivative from political society. This tension between two fundamental concepts of political philosophy will be eventually resolved; and Hegel's critique of natural law had a definite impact for that long theoretical tradition which throughout the 19th and for a good part of the 20th century was almost exclusively confined to Thomist political theory.

Actually, the whole 19th century political tradition, in its progressive and revolutionary versions as well as in its moderate ones, is anti-natural law. Even the great tradition of modern juridical thought, from Savigny to juridical positivism and normativism, undertook a systematic destruction of the foundations of natural law and developed a concept of public law and of the state in which subjectivity plays a subordinate position. Non-statist concepts of political society were developed outside of the great theoretical traditions predominant in continental Europe. It is symptomatic that the greatest synthesis of modern juridical thought of this century, that of Kelsen, consists of the most rigorous, absolute and totalitarian conception of individuality, and thus of individual rights, as a pure emanation of public, i.e., state law. In order to introduce a concept of democracy as limited government, Kelsen has to fall into a contradiction, since the philosophical relations that underlies his concept of democracy has no logical relation to his juridical theory. The Kantian split between facts and values emerges here with all its problems.

This digression in apparently extramous fields is not arbitrary, since the anthropology that underlies the entire philosophy of the Left in the past century (with the partial exception of anarchism) is wholly collectivistic. It rests on the idea that only in the public sphere can subjects realize their individuality, that only society can give full scope to subjectivity. Consequently, only the progressive politicization and publicization of life-domains can provide a material basis for that freedom that liberal thought had left empty and abstract.

Thomas Paine's claim that society is the product of our virtues and the state of our vices is totally alien to the continental philosophical tradition. And

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from such claim there followed all the democratic, radical, libertarian and individualistic themes that today enjoy a new life in response to the authoritarian tendencies of late capitalist societies. But maybe, paradoxically, there is a point of convergence between claims such as Paine's and Jacobin continental democracy. This can be seen in the fact that the process through which the state is constituted — or rather, from which it derives not so much its historical origin but its rational legitimation — is a result of the vices of individual subjects taken by themselves. It is not so much Kant's "unsociable sociability" which forces individuals to cooperate, nor is it the "invisible hand" of Smith which Paul Nozick resurrects as the process leading to the foundation of the "minimal state." The process is more complex and concerns a world view, a pessimistic anthropology of the subject who is seen incapable of self-government if left to himself.

Here different philosophical traditions meet. The fundamental principle is that subjects are incapable of expressing their potentialities, realizing their freedom, without the mediation of institutions that operate and interact in the global system and which, therefore, become the true subjects of political exchange, of bargaining and decision. Many cultural traditions converge here: the Catholic tradition which sees in political organization a limit and a brake on the tendency toward sin and elaborates a concept of political organization based on the pluralism of intermediate associations and their dominant role; the corporatist experiences of this century; and lastly the communist tradition which, from a different starting point, produced a political theory based on the predominance of the organization over the subject, although this predominance of organization was expressed historically in different ways: from the dictatorship of the party in "actually existing socialism" to the participatory and party-channelled democracy developed in Western political societies. The suspicion with which communists have always looked at new political and social movements developing outside institutional structures, outside party influence and its collateral organizations, has not been so much or only a suspicion toward the political nature of these movements, but rather a more fundamental suspicion toward the modification of decision-making procedures that the existence of such movements implied by operating outside traditional channels of mediation and representation.

The emergence of organicist ideologies of the state and of social order in late capitalist societies is a response to specific structural imperatives. The gap between the effectiveness of state intervention and social demands grows wider and is made even more wide by the profound modifications that have come about in individual and social ethics. These are expressed in the emergence of new forms of subjectivity (otherwise known as new social movements) that enter into conflict with the modes of political participation that have come about in conjunction with the activities of state intervention and whose legitimacy is often radically challenged. These movements are often outside of the circuits of legitimation of the institutional apparatuses of the state; have often challenged its forms of political representation and have con-

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stituted, if not the only, certainly a very important medium of political transformation in advanced Western societies.

This is not the place to examine closely such phenomena. Here it is sufficient to focus on one aspect, namely, the conception of the subject and of society which such movements express and the anthropology which they embody. What this involves is not only the youth movement, the women's movement, the gay movement, the ecological and anti-nuclear movements, and the urban and housing movements; but also those phenomena of attitudinal change of young people toward work, new forms of association and cooperation outside institutional mediation; and also new forms of individual and collective enterprise, in marginal sectors of society, whose main protagonists are young people.

It is clear that such movements represent a rupture with the forms of action and political principles of the collectivist Left, not only in terms of the different anthropology they embody but, more importantly, because they do not expouse that principle of hierarchisation and finalisation of political action which has been characteristic of the Left for more then a century: the principle that all contradictions and conflicts must be inscribed in a hierarchical scale of priorities, along a pre-given paradigm of subordination of the various social contradictions, within which *politics* in the traditional sense is dominant by virtue of its *synthetic* function. And it is worth noting that, in this scheme, the predominant role of politics has the consequence of delegating the representation of interests and the management of conflict to institutional political parties.

What we are left with, then, is a number of problems whose resolution is crucial to the plausibility of the Left. Before going on, let us briefly summarize the main assumptions which have characterized the identity of the Left up to now: 1) a philosophy of history which presupposed as *necessary* the evolution toward a more advanced form of social organization, i.e., communism; 2) the principle that all social contradictions can be inscribed in a scheme of *political synthesis* — a synthesis whose privileged actor was a collective historical subject, the labor movement; 3) the possibility of identifying the growth of the Left with the expansion of the spheres of *State intervention*; that is to say, the identification of the growth of the Left with the growth of the *public* spheres and of *politics*, mediated by political parties.

All of these assumptions are today under attack and many of the movements developing in advanced industrial societies are challenging them as well as the logic of the structure of compromise upon which the Left had hitherto built its identity. These movements express a *reaction* against the fundamental traits of that type of society and government which is a product of the ideologies of state intervention. They have, in the words of Ralf Dahrendorf, a *reactionary* character in relation to certain levels of equilibrium and certain entrenched features of contemporary societies. These movements embody a rejection of some tenets that provide an identity to contemporary societies (an identity which is probably too much taken for granted): the equation of

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technical-scientific progress with the advancement to the Left; the identification of the Left with the expansion of the public sphere mediated by political parties; the close connection between the Left as a theoretical-practical entity and the existence of public institutions that embody the idea of progress. A new definition of the Left in the present context cannot side-step these issues concerning its identity.

On the whole, however, the crisis of rationality of the Left does not mean the end of every rational project. The crisis of "actually existing socialism" and of the welfare state does not imply that every rational scheme of political action is impossible. Secondly, a scheme of rationality which incorporates this awareness must retrace the outcomes of the modern bourgeois concept of reason, i.e., it must confront the problem of the *dialectic of enlightenment* to see whether the resulting historical solution, namely, the connection between the dialectic of the enlightenment and Jacobin democracy, was necessarily the only possible one. Here, recent works of political philosophy on the historical development of the modern state, and the emergence of some problematic features in the theoretical and political assumptions that underlie it, have shown that the relation between the ideologies of development and the processes of state expansion was much less obvious and coherent than previously thought. The questioning today of the fundamental principles of radical democracy, and of its supportive role in relation to the constitution of the contemporary state, is a clear sympton of the necessity to rethink some issues that were taken for granted.

What is happening at the theoretical level has its counterpart in the phenomenology of contemporary political societies: the crisis of reason and of the foundations of the enlightenment-Jacobin world-view is a *form* of the *crisis of the subject*, both individual and collective, in contemporary welfare states.

The crisis of representation, legitimation, and rationality of political action, is a crisis of established patterns of relations between individual subjects and institutions. Such crisis is also a product of the history and practice of the welfare state, in the sense that the latter has profoundly affected social stratification and the formation of political actors. The new social subjects or movements that enter onto the scene of late capitalist state formations are a product of the history of these states and these societies; they are, therefore, authentically *modern*, since they are a product of this historical constellation. But, at the same time, they are *reactionary*, insofar as they express the reaction to a specific type of politics of the welfare state, namely, the identification of *liberation* and *politicization* mediated by political parties.

Thus, from a philosophical viewpoint, what is being challenged is the coupling of bourgeois reason applied to the state, i.e., the conception of the state as a machine (Carl Schmitt) *and* progress in science and technology. From a political viewpoint, it is the relation between the subject *and* the processes of macro-political rationalization.

If the destiny of the modern state, as Weber saw it, is inevitable technical-scientific rationalization, then one has to accept the absolute closure of

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bureaucratic collectivism, which in the case of capitalist countries means the total delegation of power to the great social agencies of consensus-formation. But if this is not an inevitable destiny — and today there are no compelling reasons to believe in it, since we can observe symptoms of reaction and opposition to it — then moral and political philosophers must focus on the *ways to avoid the nexus between the socialization process and the death of the subject.* This is the modern problem of political philosophy and it leads necessarily to a radical reformulation of the fundamental categories of the modern state.

Here we find the re-emergence of liberal themes, of the social contract, of the individualism of the Lockean and empiricist philosophical tradition, of natural law, a re-emergence which is as necessary as it is inadequate since the reformulation of liberal and empiricist social philosophies, of utilitarian theories of the state is framed in the original terms, without taking into account the necessary changes and shifts that such terms have undergone as a result of the transformation of liberal regimes into mass democracies. As Franz Neumann rightly pointed out in *The Democratic and the Authoritarian State*, no theory of natural rights can be a foundation for a revolutionary theory of society. On the other hand, natural law theories, the right to resistance, the principle of legality not based on positive law, have only developed out of those historical events of radical rupture in the processes of political legitimation. Today we are facing a similar historical moment; and we must not either give in to a ready optimism by considering such ruptures as already in place, or conversely be pessimistically predisposed to consider them already defeated by the power of institutions. The crisis between state and society, between institutions and social movements, is today a structural feature of late capitalist societies. How to interpret it is a complex and problematic matter. Nevertheless, the theoretical attempt to determine the meaning of the Left cannot avoid dealings with these problems.

Some ideas can be thrown up for further discussion. To begin with, the crisis of the concept of the Left can be read as the crisis of the category of the *public*; and the crisis of the category of the public, within the tradition of political and juridical thought, is the crisis of that concept of the state and public law which from Hegel to Savigny, and especially through the German juridical tradition, has provided the theoretical foundations for the development of state intervention since the end of the last century, i.e., the transformation of the legal state into the social state.

Today, when we question the forms of legitimation historically enacted by the social (Welfare) state, we see the re-emergence of those theoretical traditions which were defeated in the transition from liberal to organized capitalism: liberal theories, contract theories of the logico-historical foundations of the state, etc. In other words, we see a revitalization of the theorems of legality and of the state of law which goes back to the classical conception of the function of law, as the abstract mediation of equivalents in social exchange. This is not the place to examine these tendencies; what need to be stressed, however, is that such theoretical constructs were closely connected historically to a *con-*

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ception of the subject which has become totally obsolete. It is no longer possible today to reflect upon the forms of constitution of the subject without taking into account the profound transformations that have taken place in the sphere of post-bourgeois subjectivity. In this respect, the welfare state was a crucial factor, notwithstanding its present crisis; and a redefinition of the Left is only possible after having taken into account the fundamental changes in subjectivity brought about by the welfare state.

Secondly, the problem of a new definition of the Left is at the same time the problem of a new definition of *freedom*, which cannot consist merely in the rediscovery of liberal political themes, since in that case it would mean reducing the problem of politics to the problem of the rules of the game, and that of democracy to a question of procedures. To be sure, procedures are necessary; moreover, recent authoritarian tendencies are a demonstration that a new strategy of the Left must incorporate both the issue of the *management of complexity* and that of the *limitation and control of power.*

Nevertheless, the discussion must not be reduced to a confrontation between ancient liberties and modern liberties — a confrontation in which the Marxist tradition, through Rousseau, has sought to recycle ancient liberties as participation, as the overcoming of the separation between "bourgeois" and "citoyen", and lastly as socialist freedom. Our conception of freedom cannot be other than a post-modern conception of freedom, and therefore a conception of freedom that is able to overcome the levels of unfreedom introduced by the experience of Marxism and "actually existing socialism" into modern political consciousness. A rational approach to political philosophy cannot sidestep this problem. We cannot transcend the crisis of the historical conception of the Left without acknowledging that a new definition of the Left is also by necessity a new theory of freedom.

Finally, the most salient political element recently has been the emergence on the political scene of sizable social movements questioning the power of representation of those institutions which in the preceding decades had played a crucial role in the formation of the welfare state. Nevertheless, we must acknowledge that the attempt at political innovation which was embodied in their emergence has failed in terms of institutional results. In this respect, the present phase is one of Restoration; but the Restoration does not cancel the past but often consolidates and transmits the legacy of the past to future ages. Just as the Napoleonic Code was the codification of the bourgeois revolution but was not the work of a revolutionary, so the crisis of the Left is not the loss of relevance of the themes of *political radicalism* but its deflection as a result of a defeat which requires a theoretical and historical reflection.

At the end of these tentative relfections we are confronted with the nexus between emancipation and political liberty. This is both the return of ancient themes of political philosophy and a rediscovery of the original problems of politics. Now, since we are neither equal nor free to the degree we would like, the need today for a concept of the Left is necessitated, in addition to the crisis of its foundations, by the nature of social reality. As Rousseau said: "Man was

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born free, and he is everywhere in chains . . . How did this transformation come about? I do not know. How can it be made legitimate? That question I believe I can answer."

The problem of the Left becomes, therefore, that of formulating a new *social contract*, which means the formulation of a project of association and communal life which is able to integrate, in terms of our present historical possibilities, *liberty* with *security*. The fact is that security is a fundamental feature of the reality of the modern welfare state — a feature that renders implausible from the start any theory of justice, of equity, of society, which is based on the assumption of an atomistic subject. By the same token, the themes of freedom and self-determination, which are articulated by collective movements as a reaction to the politics of the democratic welfare state, are the proof of the failure of that theory of the overcoming of alienation which, originating in Rousseau, has undergone the experiences of radical and communist democracy and has resulted in "actually existing socialism."

The problem is how to connect a theory of *freedom* as self-determination, as emancipation and preservation of free spheres of life, with a theory of *security* which knows how to retain the historical achievements of the welfare state without either regressing to an ideology of the self-regulating market or thrusting the subject back to the conditions of a modern state of nature, as the neo-liberals would like. This connection between a theory of freedom and a theory of security is indeed the crucial task for the Left today. At present we only have certain negative insights. We know that the subject left to itself is caught in a network of social relations that overwhelm it; that no liberty is therefore possible today without planning. But we also know that the ideologies of planning have produced the most consistent totalitarian experiences of our century. Therefore, the crucial issue for the reconstruction of a Left strategy is the relationship between planning and the expansion of self-determined spheres of life. In this respect, the basic difference between a liberal conception of freedom and one that attempts to ground it on the awareness of the interdependencies of a complex society lies precisely in the acknowledgement of the problem of *complexity* as well as that of *self-determination.*

With this we are back to the central problem of political philosophy, namely, the relation between *authority* and *freedom*. The experiences of the past fifty years no longer permit us to think of this relation with the full confidence in the idea of planning that was possible for many thinkers in the thirties — especially if planning is understood to be also a reconstruction of a subjectivity that has overcome alienation as a result of the rational grounding of authority. On the other hand, no strategy of the Left is today possible if it is not capable of incorporating and articulating those forms of subjectivity which are the result of new forms of social conflict.

The dialectic authority-freedom must therefore be able to articulate a reality whose new character has rendered obsolete the previously progressive definitions of authority and freedom.

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A theory that wants to be fully critical, cannot put forward a definition of the Left that does not contain at the same time the concept of authority. In this respect, the rational acceptance of a collectively chosen plan cannot be rejected as a possible goal in complex societies; and this means that the search for forms of liberty within this complexity is the main aim of a theory and practice of emancipation.

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LEGAL AMNESIA: MODERNISM VERSUS THE REPUBLICAN TRADITION IN AMERICAN LEGAL THOUGHT

by Andrew Fraser

Not so very long ago — that is to say during the late sixties and early seventies — most Left lawyers understood the law as an ideological and repressive force imposed upon oppressed individuals, groups and classes from without. Viewed from the eye of the political storm surrounding the antiwar and Black liberation struggles, the conclusion that the law was a prime instrument of ruling class hegemony seemed obvious. Before the bar of progressive opinion, radicals presented their indictment of the entire juridical apparatus of the American state *sub nomine* the law against the people. The law was dismissed contemptuously as an elaborate structure of myths, the function of which was to obscure the underlying reality of bitter struggle between social classes. If the forms of legality were obviously ideological shams, the clear remedy was a process of demystification which would strip those illusions away, thus permitting the oppressed classes to abandon the world of legal discourse altogether in favor of popularly-based forms of direct political action. It was all stirring stuff at the time, but nowadays, of course, the New Left has moved off the front pages into the history books and the groves of academe, making it impossible to find anyone who will admit to being a crude instrumentalist. Nevertheless, the radical demand for the abolition of law has lost little of its old ideological potency.[1]

But, then, given the hoary pedigree already attached to radical anti-legalism in America, why should it have? That particular political nostrum has long been readily available in the intellectual bazaars frequented by the American Left. Radicals seeking a quick ideological high have always been able to denounce the law and all its works as a form of idolatry designed to mystify and confound the forces of popular democracy. But, however perennial its appeal may have been, that radical hostility to law has little to recommend it as an intellectual or political strategy. Too often, the radical impulse to dissolve the bonds of established legal authority in favor of some higher law has resulted in a brand of moral absolutism which offers little in the way of effective solutions to the evils and oppression which it attacks. The abolitionist refusal to recognize a Constitution which recognized slavery is but one example of an American radical movement prepared to overturn established legal institutions in order to vindicate its own sense of righteousness — at the cost, if need

1. Robert Lefcourt (ed.), *Law Against the People: Essays to Demystify Law, Order and the Courts* (New York, 1971); Cf., David Kairys (ed.), *The Politics of Law: A Progressive Critique* (New York, 1982).

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be, of abandoning the slaves of the South to their fate. The latest turn in radical legel thought augurs no better for the future.

It is true that the crudities of Marxist instrumentalism have apparently lost much of their charm — but for all the wrong reasons. Instrumentalist theory is now regarded as hopelessly inadequate, not because it refuses to recognize the deep-rooted historical relationship between American law and the constitution of republican freedom, but, rather, because it appears to bear a strong family resemblance to ninteenth century bourgeois positivism. Given that intellectual kinship, Marxist instrumentalism is, paradoxically, seen as being too far removed from the traditions of popular militancy which allegedly nourish radical thought. Both positivist and instrumentalist theories treat the law as an expression of a sovereign will standing above and beyond those governed by legal rules. The validity of those rules is, moreover, a matter to be tested by a set of purely formal criteria internal to the legal system. Those criteria direct the officals who administer the legal system to determine merely whether any given rule is a genuine expression of the sovereign will. For the positivist, it follows that the willingness of the population at large to accept the "validity" of a given rule has a purely sociological rather than legal explanation. [2] Similarly, the Marxist instrumentalist would account for the subjective internalization of law exclusively in terms of domination, oppression, and ideological manipulation. For that reason, by the end of the seventies, most radical legal intellectuals had come to reject instrumentalism on the ground that it allowed no room for the role played by all social actors, including even oppressed groups and classes, in the constitution of legal order.[3] Few people would deny that it makes little sense to present the law as a simple tool of the capitalist class. But, having rejected such obvious claptrap, radicals have shown little inclination to question their deeper assumption that formal legal institutions must always act (albeit in a complex and contradictory fashion) as engines of oppression. Instead, contemporary progressive lawyers, true to historical form, continue to insist that an organic link between legal order and the process of emancipation exists only insofar as law can be understood as an aspect of a social praxis which is deeply implicated in the constitution of the entire social order.

Having come to conceive law-making as a form of praxis,[4] progressive lawyers have insisted that the formalist distinction between legal and political discourse must become the major target of radical critique. Most critical legal scholars now proceed on the assumption that the historical role of the formalist tradition has been, not only to conceal the real sources of domination and illegitimate hierarchy by maintaining an artificial boundary between the law and politics, but also to repress and deny the element of praxis in law-making

2. For a modern, and more sophisticated, analysis of legal validity in something like those terms, see, H.L.A. Hart, *The Concept of Law* (Oxford, 1961).

3. See, for example, Andrew Fraser, "The Legal Theory We Need Now," *Socialist Review* 40-41 (July-October 1978); Karl Klare, "Judicial Deradicalization of the Wagner Act and the Origins of Modern Legal Consciousness," (1978) 62 *Minessota Law Review* 265.

4. Karl Klare, "Law-Making as Praxis," *Telos* no. 40 (Summer 1979).

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by assigning that function exclusively to the specialized institutional agencies of the legal process. Formalism rests on "a belief in the possibility of . . . a method of legal justification that can be clearly contrasted to open-ended disputes about the basic terms of social life, disputes that people call ideological, philosophical or visionary." The radical hope of emancipation is therefore made to depend upon the destruction of the formalist claim that doctrinal technique can reveal "the natural legal language of the democracy and the marketplace."[5]

The intellectual assault on legal formalism denies that the essence of democracy, the family, or of the marketplace can ever be fully or finally embodied in any determinate institutional form. In fact, critical legal scholars insist that the deepening incoherence of legal formalism follows directly from its reliance on a background theory that asserts the existence of certain "natural" forms of the democratic republic and the market, forms which, in American law, were allegedly identical with the already existing forms of corporate and governmental organization and practice. Accordingly, private law was conceived as a regime of property and contract rights geared to facilitate the natural operation of the marketplace, while public law sought to uphold a scheme of ordered liberty based on the concept of private, fixed immunities from governmental action. So long as the market order seemed natural, the scheme of ordered liberty simply incorporated that market system.[6]

But what happens when the belief that the market (or the democracy or the family) has a natural legal structure no longer seems tenable? In the post-New Deal era, a growing awareness that the form of the marketplace is largely a product of political and governmental action has undermined the basis for the policy of absolute abstention from judicial or legislative interference with the regime of property and contract rights. Rights have come to be conceived as conditional and contingent — no longer "natural." Moreover, they are conceived as conditional and contingent upon the outcome of political and ideological struggle. At that point, its critics assert, the formalist effort to construct an elaborate doctrinal edifice upon the foundation once provided by the assertedly natural forms of the democracy or the marketplace reveals itself as an attempt to crystallize a given set of power relations.[7]

Once again, radical lawyers have reached eagerly for the obvious conclusion. Legal formalism, they claim, gives doctrinal expression to a reified institutional logic of hierarchy and domination. It represents, in other words, a kind of "frozen politics" which serves only to interrupt and contain the "fighting over the basic terms of collective life." Against that formalist tradition, radical lawyers are now being urged to create the means to enhance the society's capacity for self-revision. No area of social life, it is said, should be allowed to immunize itself from challenge and revision in the course of

5. Roberto Mangabeira Unger, "The Critical Legal Studies Movement," (1983) 96 *Harvard Law Review* 563 at p. 564, 567-70; see also, Duncan Kennedy, "Legal Formality," (1973) 2 *Journal of Legal Studies* 351.

6. Unger, *op. cit.*, pp. 570-73.

7. *Ibid.* pp. 567-670.

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ordinary social activity. Modern legal consciousness, it would appear, now rests upon a vision of radical contingency according to which it is all politics. Everything is up for grabs, including our capacity to evoke anew the spirit of a time when the distinction between law and politics represented something more than a superseded state of false consciousness.[8]

Modernist Revivalism

The radical attack on legal formalism has been spearheaded by a group of academic and practicing lawyers associated with the Conference on Critical Legal Studies. The work of the Conference scholars represents a clear modernist revival of the anti-institutional themes which have been a hallmark of American religious and political radicalism ever since the Great Awakening of the early eighteenth century. Just as the evangelical spirit has always regarded the ordered institutional life of the "legal" religion rooted in a settled parish as a barrier to the true virtue attainable only through the direct and irresistible power of grace, the contemporary critical legal studies movement has become wedded to an "enthusiastic" vision of emancipation in which the reified, institutional life of society will give way to that "indivisible and whole way of being-in-a-group" which, alone, could restore in reality the "disrupted communion" promised in imagination by the law.[9]

Insisting as it does that the law represents a reified, and hence purely imaginary, form of social cohesion, the critical legal studies movement has generally failed to recognize that the institutional boundaries between legal and political discourse, like the distinction between public and private realms of human experience, might actually serve as a point of resistance to the socially corrosive "dynamics of unopposed capitalism."[10] Almost without exception, critical legal scholars have allied themselves uncritically with the evangelical crusade waged by cultural modernists against the dead hand of tradition (legal or otherwise). They have, as a consequence, remained blind to, or breezily dismissive of the republican traditions in American legal thought that might be seen as the only antidote offered by historical memory to the inexorable process of institutional breakdown now identified with the experience of modernity itself. To those who remain skeptical as to the eman-

8. *Ibid.*, pp. 586, 649-50; Mark Tushnet, "Marxism as Metaphor," (1983) 68 *Cornell Law Review* 281.

9. Peter Gabel, "Reification in Legal Reasoning," *Research in Law and Sociology*, Vol. 3 (1980), pp. 44-46; Cf. Alan Heimert, *Religion and the American Mind: From the Great Awakening to the Revolution* (Cambridge, Mass., 1966).

10. The phrase belongs to Stanley M. Elkins. His critique of the radical anti-institutionalism which surfaced so powerfully in the abolitionist crusade against slavery is written from a Burkean conservative, rather than republican, point of view. He is not sufficiently sensitive, therefore, to the possiblity that the well developed institutional life of England, which he contrasts favorably to the widespread institutional breakdown of America, served as a crucial support for the corrupt pretensions of a landed and commercial oligarchy that was both hostile to republicanism and deeply ambivalent in its relationship to capitalist modernization. Not all forms of institutional life will foster the development of a virtuous and well-ordered polity. See Stanley M. Elkins, *Slavery: A Problem in American Institutional and Intellectual Life* (New York, 1963). On the ambivalence displayed by the dominant classes in England towards capitalist modernization, see, Martin J. Wiener, *English Culture and the Decline of the Industrial Spirit* (Cambridge, 1981).

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cipatory potential inherent in the process of capitalist modernization, it might seem that "the most profound radicalism is often the most profound conservatism."[11] Such a thought has become utterly alien to the spirit of the contemporary critical legal studies movement which seems bent on destroying the few remaining institutional and cultural obstacles to the ongoing capitalist rationalization of everyday life.

Put so baldly, this claim might seem harsh and unfair, if not downright absurd. But if, as seems undeniable, the destabilizing imperative of growth already subordinates every dimension of social, public and private life to its own irresistible logic, is it so obvious that "critical" legal theory and practice should aim for the "disentrenchment" of the "formative contexts" of the whole range of practical and imaginative activity available to us? Roberto Unger, in what amounts to the manifesto of the critical legal studies movement, insists that the radical lawyer must adopt the modernist "aim of permanently weakening all those structures of practice and belief that remain impervious to criticism and transformation in the course of normal social activity." In Unger's eyes, legal formalism amounts to "the idolatrous identification of established order with practical or moral necessity."[12] Clearly, then, Unger's vision of universal transformability differs not at all from the imperative of growth which already renders the continued existence of virtually every institution and cultural practice within modern society altogether contingent and conditional.

For Unger, the extent to which "an entrenched plan of social division and hierarchy predetermines the practical relations among people and thus narrows the ground for experiment" is a measure of the degree to which a given social order is deficient in what he calls "negative capability."[13] He proposes to remedy that deficiency by implanting "structure-revising structures" within the living heart of the social process. In essence, Unger's negative capability aims to provide the administered otherness which has become necessary to further growth and social development in the "age of artificial negativity."[14] Whether or not the artifical negativity thesis can be used to provide a general explanation for the structural dynamics of advanced capitalism, it seems undeniable that Unger is responding to a perception that something very much like artificially generated negativity is needed to overcome the systemic limits to self-revision imposed by the one-dimensional logic of legal formalism.

From a systemic point of view, moreover, that perception is probably well grounded. The one-dimensionality of even the most sophisticated versions of legal formalism is evidenced most obviously in "the principle of institutional

11. T. J. Jackson Lears, *No Place of Grace: Antimodernism and the Transformation of American Culture, 1880-1920* (New York, 1981), p. xviii.

12. Unger, *op. cit.*, pp. 660-61; Cf. William E. Connolly, "Civil Disaffection and the Democratic Party," *democracy*, Vol. 2, No. 3 (July 1982), pp. 21-22.

13. Unger, *op. cit.*, pp. 650-51.

14. Paul Piccone, "The Crisis of One-Dimensionality," *Telos* 35 (Spring 1978); Tim Luke, "Culture and Politics in the Age of Artificial Negativity," *Telos* 35 (Spring 1978).

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settlement" associated with the influential model of the legal process developed by Harvard law professors Henry M. Hart and Albert M. Sacks in the nineteen-fifties. Asserting that the legal order embodied a set of shared social purposes, Hart and Sacks claimed that "a decision which is the duly arrived at result of a duly established procedure for making decisions . . . 'ought' to be accepted as binding upon the whole society unless and until it has been duly changed."[15] In the circumstances of the nineteen-sixties it became apparent that strict official adherence to such a principle would effectively license the annihilation of all forms of social specificity and otherness that, voluntarily or involuntarily, resist incorporation into the routinized processes of consensus formation and dispute resolution which underpin the contemporary corporate welfare state.

A legal order which recognized the need for negative capability or articially stimulated negativity would turn the principle of institutional settlement on its head. Every decision, indeed, every established institution, would be open to challenge and revision. Individuals and groups would find themselves empowered by "structures that turn the occasions for their reproduction into opportunities for their correction." For Unger, therefore, the enhancement of a society's negative capability would mean not just the expansion of its productive capabilities. It would also mark the appearance of an affirmative vision of the freedom available to "a self that discovers the divergence between its own transcending capabilities and the limitations of the structures in which it lives and then struggles by every means at its disposal to narrow the gap."[16]

Forgotten Republics

The struggle of the transcendent individual against the artificial constrainst imposed by a world of institutions and fixed social roles is a staple of liberal thought. Unger's manifesto represents, in that sense, and in his own words, a kind of "superliberalism." His stated goal is "to remake social life in the image of liberal politics." Once that is accomplished, social life will become "a series of conflicts and deals among more or less transitory and fragmented groups." Insofar as it identifies liberalism, conceived both as a mode of consciousness and a type of social organization, as the essential ingredient in the shaping of modern legal consciousness, Unger's work is typical of critical legal scholarship generally.[17] But the equation of liberalism with modernity has had the effect of consigning the republican tradition in American legal thought to the dustbin of pre-modernity. By establishing the principle of subjective value, Unger claims, liberalism exposed the hollowness of the republican hope that the particular substantive vision of the good articulated within the republican

15. Henry M. Hart Jr., and Albert M. Sacks, *The Legal Process* (tentative edition, Harvard Law School, 1958), pp. 4-5.

16. Unger, *op. cit.*, pp. 650-51, 662.

17. *Ibid.*, p. 602; see also, Roberto Unger, *Knowledge and Politics* (New York, 1975) and Roberto Unger, *Law in Modern Society* (New York, 1976). It seems difficult to overstate the extent to which Unger has shaped (or reflects) the philosophical premises of contemporary American critical legal thought.

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polity might overcome the contradiction between self and society. Once that contradiction was opened to view in liberal thought, it was no longer possible to conceive the state, in Aristotelian terms, as "an association of persons formed with a view to some good purpose." The basic premise of liberal thought is that all values are individual and subjective. They are "individual in the sense that they are always the objectives of particular individuals." They "are subjective in the sense that they are determined by chance. Subjectivity emphasizes that an end is an end simply because someone holds it, whereas individuality means that there must always be a particular person whose end it is."[18] Given the subjectivity of values, a liberal jurisprudence can accomplish no more than the balancing and adjustment of competing interests; a republican jurisprudence is no longer even conceivable.[19]

From the standpoint of what Unger calls total criticism, the republican tradition is bound to appear as a species of mythic consciousness. In a disenchanted world, mythology offers no escape from the contradiction between self and society. Any attempt to overcome that contradiction by establishing a regime of shared social values will be trapped, Unger alleges, in a vicious circle. Given the principle that all values are subjective and individual, "the making and application of laws will depend on choices that cannot be justified and therefore have to be perceived as pure domination exercised by some men over others." It is impossible to escape the principle of subjective value without first changing the reality of domination. That, however, presupposes, in turn, the prior existence of some regime of shared values. But the liberal principle of subjective value denies the possibility of such a regime.[20]

In fact, Unger's vicious circle exists only so long as one assumes that the rational justification of a particular subjective value can, in principle, only be expressed in the timeless language of universals. That is an essentially Christian assumption. From the moment the early popes donned the mantle of imperial authority in the name of an universal and general Christian society embracing the whole humanity, Christian social thought was forced to deny the possibility of ever achieving a final reconciliation of the contradiction between universal and particulars within the worldly boundaries of time and space. By contrast, "the republic or Aristotelian polis, as that concept reemerged in the civic humanist thought of the fifteenth century, was at once universal in the sense that it existed to realize for its citizens all the values which men were capable of realizing in this life, and particular, in the sense that it was finite and located in space and time."[21]

The republican tradition in American legal thought sought to achieve a similar reconciliation of the universal and particular within the framework of a federal Union governed by a natural aristocracy of talent, virtue and intel-

18. Unger, *Knowledge and Politics*, p. 26.
19. Unger, "Critical Legal Studies Movement," pp. 601-2.
20. Unger, *Knowledge and Politics*, pp. 1-3, 103.
21. Lauro Martines, *Power and Imagination: City-States in Renaissance Italy* (New York, 1980), p. 125; J.G.A. Pocock, *The Machiavellian Movement: Florentine Political Thought and the Atlantic Republican Tradition* (Princeton, 1975), p. 3.

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ligence. The republican lawyer was necessarily a statesman inasmuch as the unity and identity of the republic through time and across space depended upon the capacity of both bench and bar to develop and nurture the forms of practical intelligence associated with the faculty of judgment. The capacity for prudential judgment rests upon a recognition that a choice made between goods which make incompatible claims upon our practical allegiance will not destroy the moral authority of the alternative not chosen. A judge in antebellum America who chose to uphold the Fugitive Slave Act out of a concern to preserve the Union was not necessarily denying the sinfulness of slavery. Rather, he was recognizing that we cannot always do everything we ought to do. The rightness of a particular choice therefore, could be judged only in terms of some conception of the unity of the life of the republic. That conception of unity would take the form of a historical narrative within which the life of the republic could be seen to occupy a time and space of its own, stretching back to the moment of its foundation and forward to its, perhaps inevitable, end.[22]

Within American legal thought, the moral force of that republican tradition has been consistently undercut by both the evangelical passions of Protestant Christianity and the vast expansion of mobile property spawned by the spread of capitalist social relations. The anti-institutional spirit of evangelical Christianity has evinced a persistent hostility to the worldly structures of the body politic. The evangelical mind has always located the source of virtue in an experience of grace transcending the secular preoccupations of prudential judgment. While enthusiastic religion worked to loosen the worldy bonds between individuals, the rise of a capitalist market economy threw those same individuals into a desperate scramble after the symbols of material success. Once the evangelical mind managed to interpret material prosperity as a sign of God's redeeming grace, the life of the republican body politic was inevitably subordinated to the imperatives of economic growth and development.

The republican tradition spawned by the Italian Renaissance was relatively pure by comparison. It did not understand change as a progression towards ever-higher forms of life. As early as the thirteenth century, "The world in which the good life was possible seemed to stretch not much further than immediate political horizons." According to Pocock "the process of change that the Aristotelian intellect singled out was that by which a thing came to be and then not to be: *physis*, the process by which it fulfilled its end, perfected its form, realized its potential, and then ceased — all of which are extensions of the idea of coming to be and then not to be. All things come to an end in time." In republican thought the preservation of a particular polity through time depends upon the existence of a citizenry committed to the particular purposes for which the state had been founded. By the eighteenth century, English republicanism recognized that there must exist "a material founda-

22. Rufus Choate, "An Instrumetentality of the State," in Charles M. Haar, *The Golden Age of American Law* (New York, 1965), pp. 20-25; Alasdair MacIntyre, *After Virtue: A Study in Moral Theory* (Notre Dame, 1981) pp. 144-45, 208-09.

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tion, the equivalent of Aristotle's *oikos*, for [the] independence, leisure and virtue" of the civic individual.[23] Virtue could not reproduce itself from itself. As a consequence, the common law could be interpreted as bulwark thrown up by the ancient constitution to safeguard the material foundations of civic virtue. The traditional logic of property could therefore be conceived, as it was by Blackstone,[24] as the body of rules and principles governing the relationship between men and the external things of the world. By the same token, authority was vested in natural persons, rather than in an impersonal and open-ended process within which one form of social or institutional life would disappear only to be replaced by another.

The fate awaiting that republican tradition in America was captured in microcosm by the history of the early American business corporation. The business corporation, after all, did not simply spring into being as a full-blown private economic unit of capital accumulation. In the early years of the American republic, the private corporation, far from representing the dynamic cutting edge of capitalist expansion, was subjected to fierce radical attacks as a bastion of monopoly and special privilege narrowing the range of opportunities available to the upwardly mobile and aggressive entrepreneurial spirit of the times. That criticism was not misplaced. In fact and in law, the private corporation was a body politic in the traditional Aristotelian sense, constituted by special act of the state legislatures. Whether it was chartered for charitable, educational, religious or business purposes, the private corporation stepped forth as a "little republic," an "association of persons formed with a view to some good purpose."[25]

The particular purposes to be served by a given corporate enterprise were specified in its charter. Because the powers granted by the charter defined the political identity of the body corporate, the common law doctrine of *ultra vires* could be invoked to block even a voting majority of shareholders intent upon abandoning the original object of the enterprise so as to pursue some other, potentially more profitable, line of business. The *ultra vires* doctrine was clearly premised on the assumption that the members of the corporate body politic shared a world common to them all and distinguishable from their privately owned places within it. It was taken equally for granted that the prudent management of that common enterprise would require some degree of civic consciousness among the shareholders.[26]

In order to facilitate the emergence of such a civic ethos, authority within the body corporate generally remained vested in a body of natural persons. As they came together in the public sphere constituted by the general meetings of the body corporate, the shareholders did not usually represent the mere personification of their individual capitals. Rather, particularly in the case of banks and insurance companies, voting rights were often distributed accord-

23. Pocok, *op. cit.*, pp. 5, 450.
24. William Blackstone, *Commentaries on the Laws of England*. Vol. 2 (Chicago, 1979; original ed. 1766), p. 2.
25. Andrew Fraser, "The Corporation as a Body Politic," *Telos* 57 (Fall 1983).
26. *Ibid.*

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ing to regressive schemes limiting the voting power of large shareholders. It was not uncommon to find provisions prescribing the maximum number of votes (often ten) exercisable by any one shareholder.[27]

So long as the members of the body corporate acted together in their natural capacity, it remained a political institution. The power wielded by the corporation in its external relations was, therefore, in important ways, a species of political, and not merely economic, power. Not surprisingly, then, the identity of the corporation as a body politic represented a direct affront to American radicals afire with the anti-institutional passions spawned by evangelical Protestantism. In the end, the destruction of the corporation as a body politic coincided with the absorption of the private business corporation into precisely that sort of impersonal and open-ended process of capital accumulation that American radicals would come to interpret as a progression towards ever-higher forms of social life.

Capitalist Rationalization and the (Social) Science of Law

The radical anti-institutionalism which now finds expression within the critical legal studies movement seeks to release the immanent, albeit repressed, logic of the social life-process. The self-proclaimed historical role of the movement is to speak with the voice of an authentic otherness repressed and denied by the reified institutional forms which persuade people that "all the hierarchical relations in which they live and work are natural and necessary."[28] Unfortunately, by identifying legal discourse, as such, with mystification and reification, critical legal scholars have simply transmogrified the liberal morality of self-interest into a romantic and now openly irrationalist morality of self-expression.[29]

It has become an article of faith among leading figures in the critical legal studies movement that to treat any established institution — past, present or future — as a legitimate repository of valid moral authority is to prostrate "the personality to an idol that it mistakes for its own indefinite or even infinite self." Having conceived institutional life as a crystallized form of illegitimate hierarchy, "the only thing to which the personality can give final authority is itself." Once the individual has been so constituted as the ultimate arbiter of moral values, radical critique is transmuted effortlessly into a Nietzchean exaltation of the will to power.[30]

Modernist lawyers proclaim that all attempts at the rational vindication of morality have failed. It follows that belief in the tenets of morality can only be explained "in terms of a set of rationalizations which conceal the fundamentally non-rational phenomenon of the will."[31] It is that same preoccupation

27. See, for example, "An Act to incorporate sundry persons by the Name of the President and Directors of the Union Bank," (June 25, 1792), *Laws of the State of Massachusetts*, Vol. 2 (Boston, 1780-1807).

28. Robert Gordon, "New Development in Legal Theory," in Kairys, *op. cit.*, p. 287.

29. Cf. Gerald Stourzh, *Alexander Hamilton and the Idea of Republican Government* (Stanford, 1970), pp. 93-4.

30. Unger, "Critical Legal Studies Movement," pp. 660-61; MacIntyre, *op. cit.*, p. 108.

31. MacIntyre, *op. cit.*, p. 111.

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with the phenomenon of the will which has led critical legal scholars to conceive the goal of their projected program of institutional and doctrinal reforms as a process of *empowerment*. The experience of empowerment involves an open-ended process of self-transcendence which must treat even the distinction between self and other as the product of a reifying logic of domination. Unger's disciples within the critical legal studies movement now look forward to a form of human discourse which has "ceased to reflect a distinction between self and other, or a preoccupation with that dichotomy or categories derived from that dichotomy."[32] Pushed to its logical extremity, the anti-institutionalist ideal of self-expression culminates in the totalitarian impulse to dissolve both self and other into an overarching "ideal of the social."

The mature ideal of the social eschews commitment to any particular substantive vision of the good. Instead it is grounded in the image of a fully reflexive legal order — a legal order, that is, which institutionalizes the individual and collective capacity for self-transcendence. Unger's "negative capability" might be conceived, therefore, as an index of the organizational reflexivity which would be necessary to overcome the persistent tension between function and performance within the social subsystems of a functionally differentiated social system. Negative capability, in other words, is a measure of the evolutionary potential inherent in a given legal order. The ideal of the social therefore locates both self and other within the framework of a social evolutionary model of legal and moral development.[33] Having said that, it becomes vital to recognize that the ideal of the social is by no means the exclusive intellectual property of the critical legal studies movement. That ideal was born and grew to maturity in America during the heyday of legal formalism. It found some of its earliest nursemaids in the new professional law schools which sprang up in the late nineteenth century to follow the lead established by Harvard.

Paul Piccone has suggested that "the age of one-dimensionality" made notorious by Herbert Marcuse "was only a transition period between entrepreneurial capitalism and the full domination of capital."[34] The American law school still belongs to that era. It is quite clear that the Harvard case-study model of legal education represented a direct response to the crisis of authority entailed by the disintegration of the autonomous "island communities" of nineteenth century America. As the rising tide of capitalist rationalization progressively obliterated traditional sources of social specificity and political negativity, members of the traditional gentry class, and lawyers in particular, were forced to recognize that their authority would have to be reconstituted on a solid scientific footing.[35]

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32. Unger, "Critical Legal Studies Movement," *passim*; Clare Dalton, Review of Kairys (ed.) *The Politics of Law*, (1983) 6 *Harvard Women's Law Journal*, 229 at p. 241.

33. Cf. Gunther Teubner, "Substantive and Reflexive Elements in Modern Law," (1983) 17 *Law and Society Review* 239.

34. Piccone, *op. cit.*, p. 45.

35. Thomas L. Haskell, *The Emergence of Professional Social Science: The American Social Science*

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By the end of the nineteenth century, lawyers could no longer rest their claims to moral and political authority upon the unbroken continuity of professional traditions or the ancient rituals governing the "artifical reason" of the common law. As American society became more interdependent with the growth of a national economy and large-scale corporate enterprise, the isolated "island communities" characteristic of the pre-industrial world came to be more and more influenced, if not dominated by events and persons at a distance from themselves. The search for the effective cause of events occuring in one's own immediate environment necessarily became more complex and mysterious: "One's person milieu which is the source of the average man's entire conception of the larger society, was drained of vitality and made transparent, so to speak, to the play of influences originating far beyond the individual's range of vision." That being so, it became necesary to expand the range of inquiry and to change the conditions of satisfying explanation. "Common sense fails and the claim of expertise gains plausibility." As Thomas Haskell has shown, members of the traditional professions had to acquire a general understanding of social causation, one which extended beyond the specific circumstances of a given time and place. Only in that way could they continue to perform their traditional social function which "was to ascertain causation and to mediate between the island community and the outside world."[36]

It followed that "the movement to establish authority required that there be a science of society." The task of promoting the development of such a science was undertaken by the American Social Science Association which (like the American Bar Association which was founded under its auspices) sought to create a community of inquiry which would serve "to identify competence, cultivate it and confer authority on those who possessed it in accordance with universalistic criteria or, more realistically, criteria that were not in any obvious way personal, partisan, or particular." The two best-known proponents of the case-study method of legal education were both active members of the American Social Science Association. As conceived by President Eliot and Christopher Columbus Langdell at Harvard, the case study method was clearly intended to reconstitute the legal profession as an especially select community of the competent. The professional academic practitioners of the case study technique soon set about "enriching" the "artificial reason of the common law" with such "scientific" concepts as causation, will, fault and forseeablity. Langdell's claim that it was possible to discern a finite body of doctrinal principles beneath the swelling mass of particular cases represented a first step in the effort to establish a science of law which might someday become a vital element within a more comprehensive and developed science

Association and the Nineteenth Century Crisis of Authority, (Urbana, 1977); see also, Robert H. Wiebe, *The Search for Order, 1877-1920* (New York, 1967). Wiebe (p. xiii) argues that "America during the nineteenth century was a society of island communities. Weak communications severely restricted the interaction among these islands and dispersed the power to form opinion and enact public policy . . . The heart of American democracy was local autonomy."

36. Haskell, *op. cit.*, pp. 32-46, 81-89, 221.

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of society.[37]

That effort to reconstitute traditional authority on a social scientific basis clearly placed a premium on the acquisition of formal educational credentials. Admission to the community of scientific, managerial and professional experts who would henceforth shape the evolution of American society could only be gained through a recognized process of certification. Through the early years of the twentieth century the leaders of the American Bar Association waged a determined and successful campaign for higher educational standards within the legal profession. By mid-century a college degree had become the basic prerequisite for admission to law school. At the same time, the Harvard case-study model had become all but universal in university law schools. Taken together those two developments ensured that the most prestigious American law schools would dance to a single tune.[38]

The homogenization of American legal education transformed the republican ethos which had animated the bench and bar of the early nineteenth century into a formalist obsession with legal technique. By asserting that the law could be defined as whatever governments actually do, the legal realists of the nineteen-thirties did not significantly depart from that formalist emphasis on technique. Instead, they helped to usher in the era of one-dimensionality by invoking a set of empirical social science techniques designed to shift the focus of inquiry away from the "law in the books" to the "law in action."[39] The fundamental flaw in the early Langdellian scheme was to imagine that the distinctive mode of civic consciousness which had belonged to a republican legal profession could ever be reconciled with the disembodied, depersonalized and decontextualized discursive style sponsored within an advanced capitalist legal system. Once the science of law was tied directly to the science of society, the locus of ultimate authority shifted, and was seen to shift, from the polity to the life processes of society itself. The project of jurisprudential and law reform was therefore inseparable from the wider tasks of social reform and reconstruction. Civic consciousness was replaced by the social conscience. Informed by the techniques of social and administrative science, the social conscience demanded then, as it does now, the progressive erosion of the legal boundaries insulating the public, private and social spheres from each other and from conscious control and manipulation.

The tasks of social reconstruction and law reform became the special province of the intellectual. But the appearance of "the intellectual as a social

37. *Ibid.*, pp. 87-89; Anthony Chase, "The Birth of the Modern Law School," (1979) 23 *American Journal of Legal History* 329.

38. Jerold S. Auerbach, *Unequal Justice: Lawyers and social Change in Modern America* (New York, 1977), pp. 102-129.

39. Cf. John Henry Schlegel, "American Legal Realism and Empirical Social Science: From the Yale Experience," (1979) 28 *Buffalo Law Review* 459; John Henry Schlegel, "American Legal Realism and Empirical Social Science: The Singular Case of Underhill Moore," (1980) 29 *Buffalo Law Review* 195; see also, Edward A. Purcell, Jr., *The Crisis of Democratic Theory: Scientific Naturalism and the Problem of Value* (Lexington, Ky., 1973); for a view locating the historical roots of the critical legal studies movement in legal realism, see Note, "Round and Round the Bramble Bush: From Legal Realism to Critical Legal Scholarship," (1982) 95 *Harvard Law Review* 1669.

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type" did not herald the triumph of a New Class of intellectuals over the old class of moneyed capitalists.[40] Rather, the process of capitalist rationalization forced both members of the traditional gentry class and capitalist entrepreneurs alike, to become intellectuals in the distinctively modern sense of that word. Even the great moneyed capitalists of the Gilded Age were, as William Appleman Williams has remarked, themselves "intellectuals: individuals who made it their business (*literally*) to make coherent, inclusive sense out of all the seemingly separate, unrelated facts that came across their desks every day."[41] Members of the professional gentry class, faced with the disintegration of their traditional claims to authority, were forced to follow suit. In the process of transforming itself into a properly credentialled community of the competent, the old gentry class, in effect, committed cultural suicide. It was, however, a form of self-destruction made all the more painless by an abiding faith in the existence of a secular hereafter in which the old gentry class could find itself reconstituted as a scientific, managerial and professional elite charged with the task of overseeing a new era of rational social organization.

The failure of legal formalism in America is bound up closely with a systemic need to perfect the techniques of effective social administration. The formalist tradition employed private law categories in the service of a social theory which emphasized the dangers and limitations of state intervention. That theory was not just the residual legal expression of the legacy of localism and laissez-faire dating from the ante-bellum era. Nor was it simply an attempt to shift the economic and social costs of business enterprises to powerless and disadvantaged groups. It also reflected a realistic assessment, informed by the "best" social science of the day, of the simple inadequacy, inefficiency and corruption of the bureaucratic machinery available to the federal and state governments, including, in particular, their judicial branches.[42]

To the extent that large-scale governmental, corporate and even judicial bureaucracies have now developed an arsenal of administrative techniques which convey at least the illusion of effectiveness, the systemic need for an autonomous and self-contained set of private law categories has been thrown into question. The elevation of administrative expertise has also reduced the faculty of judgment to a legal anachronism. Now that the regulation of social life has become the province of managerial technique, the fusion of intelligence and virtue once presupposed by the act of judging has decomposed into its constituent elements. The cultivation of virtue has been delegated to

40. Christopher Lasch, *The New Radicalism in America, 1889-1963: The Intellectual as a Social Type* (New York, 1967); cf., Alvin W. Gouldner, *The Future of Intellectuals and the Rise of the New Class* (New York, 1980).

41. William Appleman Williams, *Empire as a Way of Life* (New York, 1980), p. 101.

42. See, generally, Morton Keller, *Affairs of State: Public Life in Late Nineteenth Century America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979).

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the morally autonomous private individual, while the exercise of political intelligence has been transformed into a quest for administrative efficiency in the pursuit of pre-determined ends. The boundaries separating public from private law no longer signify the existence of distinct realms of human experience, each of which could be expected to provide individuals with a schooling in the virtues and forms of practical intelligence appropriate to the performance of its own function within the wider society.

In the post-realist era of legal scholarship, it might therefore seem impossible to deny "that" 'private ordering' presupposes that public power has established a sphere of rules and enforcement agencies, that the 'unregulated' market is a fiction, and that private ordering is itself a mode of public regulation."[43] The most influential post-war version of formalism (the so-called "reasoned elaboration" approach developed by Henry M. Hart and Albert Sacks) insisted nonetheless that legal technique itself could provide the basis for a coherent and meaningful distinction between private ordering and the various modes of public regulation. For Hart and Sacks, the law could be conceived as an institutionalized process of consensus formation and dispute resolution. Every society, they claimed, is a "common enterprise" which inevitably generates "questions of common concern which have to be settled, one way or another, if the enterprise is to maintain itself and to continue to serve the purposes which it exists to serve." But not "every question of group concern . . . can be decided by officials." The legal order therefore "assigns many kinds of questions to private decision, and then backs up the private decision, if it has been duly made, when and if it is challenged before officials." To the extent that the legal order preserves the sphere of private ordering, it embodies our shared social commitment to the value of personal autonomy. The commitment to private autonomy does not, however, require a policy of unlimited deference to the outcomes generated within the sphere of private decision. Rather, private ordering must be regulated in such a way as "to make the most of its virtues while curbing its abuses." It may happen in some circumstances that the value of private autonomy would be better served if private decision were supplanted "entirely with some form or another of offical decision." Legal technique defines the "optimum role" of private decision and, in so doing, makes it obvious that private rights exist as a matter of public policy.[44]

The formalist regime of shared social purposes sought, in effect, to reconstitute the entire fabric of social life in its own depersonalized and rationalized image. Operating in tandem with Keynesian techniques of economic management, the very attempt to obliterate all traces of negativity and otherness through legal strategies such as court-ordered school desegregation or state-sponsored collective bargaining has simply displaced crisis tendencies from the social and

43. Karl E. Klare, "The Public/Private Distinction in Labor Law," (1982) 130 *University of Pennsylvania Law Review* 1358 at p. 1415; Mark Tushnet, "Post-Realist Legal Scholarship," (1979) 15 *Journal of the Society of Public Teachers of Law* 20.

44. Hart and Sacks, *op. cit.* pp. 6-9, 209.

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economic spheres into the administrative system itself.[45] The result has been to produce what Habermas calls a "rationality deficit" within the administrative apparatus. "On the one hand the state is supposed to act as a collective capitalist. On the other hand, competing individual capitals cannot form or carry through a collective will as long as the freedom of investment is not eliminated. Thus arise the mutually contradictory imperatives of expanding the planning capacity of the state with the aim of a collective capitalist planning and, yet, blocking precisely this expansion, which would threaten the continued existence of capitalism. Thus the state apparatus vacillates between expected intervention and forced renunciation of intervention, between becoming independent of its clients in a way that threatens the system and subordinating itself to their particular interests. Rationality deficits are the

45. Court-ordered school desegregation might be understood as an attempt to reduce all of social life (including the social right to choose one's associates and the private right over one's children) to a single set of terms derived from a principle of equality which, properly speaking, belongs to the public realm alone. See Hannah Arendt, "Reflections on Little Rock," *Dissent*, Vol. 1 (Winter 1959), pp. 45-56.

Within the present scheme of state-sponsored collective bargaining, the statutory requirement that the parties to a collective agreement bargain in "good faith" could be read as a mandate permitting the National Labor Relations Board to scrutinize the substantive fairness of an employer's offer. According to Karl Klare, only the persistence of the meaningless and incoherent public/private distinction stands in the way of such an obviously desirable policy. Klare's vision of a "radicalized" Wagner Act would simply collapse the boundary between the collective bargaining regime and the administrative system. That outcome would no doubt resemble the centralized wage-fixation system established under the Australian industrial arbitration and conciliation system. See Klare, "Judicial Deradicalization." It is difficult to see how a centralized arbitration and conciliation system, which, in effect, establishes trade unions as a constituent element in the apparatus of a corporatist state, could amount to the "radicalization" of the legal regime governing industrial relations. For an analysis of the distinctly non-radical origins of the Australian arbitration system, see John Rickard, *Class and Politics: New South Wales, Victoria and the Early Commonwealth 1890-1910* (Canberra, 1976).

Habermas claims that the "expansion of the areas of state planning actually makes problematic matters that were formerly culturally taken for granted." If that is so, one might expect that an extension of the state-sponsored system of collective bargaining which covered, say, faculty members at private universities, would tend to undermine the vitality of those academic traditions which, in however attenuated a fashion, lend support to practices such as collegial decision-making. Such cultural traditions, according to Habermas, can remain living only so long "as they take shape in an unplanned nature-like manner, or are shaped with hermeneutic consciousness" (Jürgen Habermas, *Legitimation Crisis* [Boston, 1975], pp. 70-73). Klare believes that, had the Supreme Court upheld the NLRB decision to recognize faculty members at Yeshiva University as "employees" under the National Labor Relations Act, the way would have been open to incorporate demands for "a more authentic, participatory voice in workplace governance" into the collective bargaining process in non-academic settings. The tradition of collegial decision making could then, in other words, be "objectivistically prepared and strategically employed" in the service of an administrative program "in which workers' self-learning and team decision-making emerge as valued productive forces." However, the opposite result seems just as likely: faculty members would develop an "employee" consciousness, while academic administrators continue to hollow out whatever remains of the traditions of faculty autonomy and collegial decision-making. Once again, the Australian experience is instructive. Academic staff in Australian universities are free to pursue their "industrial" interests before arbitral tribunals. University administrators are equally free to treat their academic staff as "employees" and to promote, by fair means or foul, the growth of a passive, public service mentality which is, if anything, actively hostile to anything like participatory democracy in the academic workplace. Cf. Karl Klare, "The Bitter and the Sweet: Reflections on the Supreme Court's Yeshiva Decision," *Socialist Review* 71 (September-October 1983).

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unavoidable result of a snare of relations into which the advanced capitalist state fumbles and in which its contradictory activities must become more and more muddled."[46]

In such circumstances, it is hardly surprising that the intellectually advanced sectors of the legal-administrative regime should come to abandon the formalist distinction between legal discourse and the ordinary language of political and ideological conflict. It has become almost a truism of modern political theory "that the realization of *private* capital is politically mediated down to the last detail." So long as the economic system is "regulated and sustained by permanent political intervention," it is hardly possible to conceive an autonomous sphere of private activity, immunized against state intervention by the legal institutions of property, contract and the family.[47] That being so, the critical legal studies movement insists that any attempt to preserve the formal distinction between legal and political or moral discourse can only serve the interests of those whose power or privileges are too well entrenched to be threatened by the ordinary conflicts over the use and control of state power. Indeed, the critical legal studies movement clearly represents a direct response to the rationality crisis which has emerged within an American legal order attempting to preserve the fictions of formalism in the face of the growing politicization of the law. By stripping away those fictions, the radical critique of formalism aims to provide all those once denied an effective voice in the making and application of the law the power to make themselves heard.

The Critique of Professionalism

Given that objective, the rationality deficit within the legal system manifests itself most insistently for radical lawyers on the level of everyday legal practice. The erosion of the republican distinction between autonomous spheres of public and private action has given rise to an ideal of law which seeks to mediate between the individual and collective poles of our social being. That polarity, according to a widely-cited article by Duncan Kennedy, is rooted in the structure of human consciousness. It finds its legal expression in two opposed rhetorical modes of legal argument: individualism and altruism, neither of which represents a self-contained deductive system, corresponding to autonomous realms of human experience, but, rather, appears "as a pole or tendency or vector or bias" in an inescapable contest between sets of values and visions of the universe. In mediating the conflict between our individualist and altruist impulses, lawyers necessarily contribute to the making and unmaking of society.[48] But, according to critical legal scholars such as William

46. Habermas, *op. cit.*, pp. 62-63.

47. See, Claus Offe, "Political Authority and Class Structures" in Paul Connerton, ed., *Critical Sociology* (Harmondsworth, 1976) pp. 413, 394-95.

48. Duncan Kennedy, "Form and substance in Private Law Adjudication" (1976) 89 *Harvard Law Review* 1685 at pp. 1732, 1712-17, 1724. Kennedy's claim that it is the function of law to mediate the "fundamental contradiction" between the individual and collective poles of our social being has been translated into the sphere of international legal discourse by David Kennedy, "Theses about International Law Discourse" (1980) 23 *German Yearbook of International Law* 353. That article refers to "a basic quandary which is both familiar and elusive. A first statement of

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Simon, that task has been rendered inherently contradictory and self-defeating by the one-dimensional logic associated with the formalist ideology of advocacy. For example, because the legal order is conceived as the embodiment of a set of shared social norms which define, among other things, the institutional role of the advocate, litigants are encouraged "to act not as an individual seeking justice but as a conduit for issues and arguments of public interest." The result, in Simon's view, is that those norms are stripped of their ethical significance for both lawyer and client.[49]

Assuming a posture of neutrality, the lawyer invites the court to treat the client's personal claim, not "as a particular embodiment of a shared value, but rather as an opportunity for the general furtherance of a variety of social norms." Inevitably, the client, too, must adopt an instrumental approach to those social norms, regarding them simply as a means to his own selfish ends. If, on the other hand, the client is unable to identify some widely shared social norm under cover of which he is able to advance his own personal concern, he soon "learns that social norms are neither shared, nor values." So long as the advocate is expected, as a matter of professional ethics, to adopt that pose of neutrality with respect to his client's concerns and values, he will inevitably subordinate those individual values to the collective norms served by the legal order. At the same time, Simon contends, the ethical canon enjoining the advocate to act as the fearless partisan of his client's interests will encourage *him to employ those collective norms as mere facts or tools for the manipulation* of the law in the service of his client's selfish purposes.[50]

Having established its incoherence, at least to his own satisfaction, Simon argues that the persistence of the formalist ideology of advocacy, along with the codes of professional ethics which represent its formal doctrinal expression, can only be explained as a means of disguising the power wielded by lawyers over the clients. Professional ethics serve to crystallize a set of power relations thereby institutionalizing yet another form of illegitimate hierarchy and domination. The ideology of advocacy insists, for example, that the principle of neutrality is necessary if clients are to be guaranteed fair access to legal services. But Simon argues that lawyers who decline, for "ethical" reasons, to inquire too deeply into the relationship between their own goals and values

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the quandary would be: individual nations find in socialization both the source of their identity and threat to their existence. Their identity as sovereign states with legitimate and respected internal authority depends on their participation in an international society which is not compatible with that sovereign authority. They cannot be both internally absolute and externally social. Moreover, their ability to be social depends upon their community membership. This contradiction seems inherent in the idea of a boundary between domestic and international life" (p. 361).

It would be interesting to review David Kennedy's abstractly conceived and unproblematically posed notion of international "socialization" in the light of Immanuel Wallerstein's *The Modern World-System. Vol. 1. Capitalist Agriculture and the Origins of the European World-Economy in the Sixteenth Century*. (New York, 1974), Vol. II. *Mercantilism and the Consolidation of the European World-Economy, 1600-1750* (New York, 1980).

49. William H. Simon, "The Ideology of Advocacy: Procedural Justice and Professional Ethics" (1978), *Wisconsin Law Review* 29, pp. 85-86.

50. *Ibid.*, pp. 36-37, 85-86.

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and those of their clients must, in the end, necessarily adopt the expedient of imputing to the client a standardized set of goals more or less appropriate to the client's legal problem — as defined by the lawyer. The real consequence of professional ethics then is to undermine the client's autonomy and heighten his dependence on the lawyer.[51]

In place of professional ethics, Simon proposes a form of "non-professional advocacy" which would permit lawyers to inquire into the goals and values of a prospective client and, if necessary, to call upon the client to justify those goals. In essence, Simon's critique of the formalist ideology of advocacy seeks to create a form of legal discourse which will permit the law to penetrate and reconstitute the inner life of both lawyers and clients. His goal is to overcome the "discontinuity between experience in the social world and experience in the world of ostensibly autonomous legal institutions." In its present form, legal discourse is rendered ineffective as a means to personal growth by a code of professional ethics which prevents access to the particular subjectivity of the individual client. Simon therefore suggests a redefinition of the advocate's role which would require "that the problem of advocacy be treated as a matter of personal ethics."[52]

Simon's focus on the personal ethics of the non-professional advocate represents, in effect, a form of artificial negativity designed to unblock the institutional stasis engendered by the one-dimensional logic of legal formalism. The domination of legal institutions by a "trained occupational minority" disrupts the continuity which should exist between legal and social experience. Because the law is a crucial matrix in the constitution of our social identity, it "should be accessible to those who are governed by it."[53] Legal discourse must recognize and accomodate the particular values and ends of the individual client. Both lawyers and clients must, accordingly, make their values and ends the objects of a discourse which serves to expose the hidden, inner life of the individual to the compelling logic of the social.

The first effect of such a discourse would be to dissolve the moral authority of established institutional bonds and affiliations. If the problem of advocacy is "treated as a matter of personal ethics," no claim made by either advocate or client could be validated merely by reference to the speaker's social position or authority. The obligations that arise from personal ethics "apply to people merely by virtue of the fact that they are human individuals . . . they do not follow from social role or station." The relationship between lawyers and clients would become self-grounded and fully reflexive. Like Gouldner, Simon believes that the culture of critical discourse has come to embody the

51. *Ibid.* Professional ethics may lead the advocate to impute those standardized goals to a client even when the client explicitly repudiates those goals. The advocate's justification would be that the client is not the best judge of his own best interests, legally speaking. The case of Gary Gilmore, a convicted murderer who refused to consent to an appeal against his own death sentence, provides a dramatic illustration of that possibility. The lawyers who had represented Gilmore at his original trial filed such an appeal over his repeated objections. See the account of this case in Norman Mailer, *The Executioner's Song* (New York, 1980).

52. Simon, *op. cit.*, pp. 114-119, 131.

53. *Ibid.*, p. 117.

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self-transformative potential of a society rendered open and transparent to itself by the reflexive logic of critical speech. Once the culture of critical speech becomes firmly rooted in the practice of non-professional advocacy, no institution could define the obligations of either lawyer or client in advance. A lawyer bound to take responsibility for his own actions could not simply "defer to institutions with autonomous ethical momentum."[54] Critique, as others have suggested, would become "a powerful device for stripping away from us, if we choose, the legal abstractions by which we order our perceptions." A critique of contemporary professional ethics would "stand validated" so long as "it influences the audience's experience of and activity within society, in ways suggested by the critique."[55] Lawyers and clients would thus be freed to redefine the role and obligations attached to advocacy whenever the personal ethical committments of either party create the need for such redefinition.

Far from representing a critical challenge to the dominant forms of power in the contemporary world, Simon's non-professional advocacy would function, like the social work practices which it strongly resembles, "as a relay, a form of surveillance for those who are denied full discursive rights but who are not sufficiently dangerous to require the rigorous surveillance of the institution . . . . " Non-professional advocacy plays that role by, first of all, uncovering the concrete goals and values of the individual client. Once having revealed the client as a subject, the advocate's task becomes one of integrating that subjectivity with the objectifying characteristics of the law (" . . . overcoming the discontinuity between social and legal experience"). According to Clare Dalton, "the advocate has a crucial role to play in . . . the presentation of new voices to decision-makers." Critical legal work therefore seeks new "ways to tap into social experience in the interests of interim decision-making and future theory." Like the social worker, the non-professional advocate speaks for the subject within the object: "the individual within the madman, the criminal or the dying. He speaks for the subject whom others have ceased to perceive, and he also speaks about someone who can return again to subjective status." But even as he represents the subjectivity of the client to the powerful, the non-professional advocate serves as an agent of surveillance and social control by representing the power of the social to the client. The individual client is to be brought to a recognition of himself as "a social subject: a subject marked by his capacities for self-determination, responsible citizenship, and general sociability."[56] In Simon's own words: "Indeed, one of the most important effects of non-professional advocacy should be to increase the client's concern for the impact of his conduct on others, and to enlarge the minimal role which norms such as reciprocity and community now play in attorney-client decisions."[57]

54. *Ibid.*, pp. 131-132; cf. Gouldner, *op. cit.*

55. Dalton, *op. cit.*, p. 241.

56. Mark Philip, "Notes on the Form of Knowledge in Social Work" (1979), *Sociological Review* (New Series), 83, pp. 104, 100-103; cf. Dalton, *op.cit.*, p. 248.

57. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

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The allegiance of Simon's ethical individual is owed, finally, to the transcendent ideal of the social. As we have already seen, the transformation of property into capital submerges both the private and the public realm in the process of social wealth. Mario Tronti has put the point neatly: "When capitalist production has been generalized to cover all of society — all social production has become capitalist production — only then, on this basis, a truly *capitalist society* emerges as a determinate historical fact. The social character of production has been extended to such a point that the entire society now functions as a *moment* of production." The generalization of capitalist production realized in the form of social capital reduces even the individual capitalist property owner to "a function of his own capital, and the direct expression of his private property." With the rise of social capital, power itself becomes detached from the body politic and becomes an attribute of the social. Considered as social beings, men and women gain the power to produce and reproduce themselves as they learn to make and remake society. The only effective limits to that power depend upon the capacity of the imagination and the will to break free of the illusion that any established set of institutional arrangements or gender identities could exhaust all the possible and desirable forms of human association available to us. On that assumption, power can no longer be understood as "an institution, a structure, or a certain force with which certain people are endowed: it is the name given to a complex strategic situation in a given society." The problem for legal modernists, then, is to understand the way in which the formalist belief that "authoritative legal materials — the system of statutes, cases and accepted legal ideas — embody and sustain a defensible scheme of human association" actually works to freeze a given set of power relations.[58]

By underwriting otherwise illegitimate hierarchies and fixed social roles, the formalist legal order confers a real strategic advantage upon established institutional actors in the struggle to control the shape and direction of social life. That strategic advantage, according to legal modernists, has been encapsulated in and justified by reference to the fusion of knowledge and power realized in the ordinary techniques of social administration. As Unger remarks, "knowledge changes the object by placing it in the state of subordination that being an object implies." It follows that when "the object is another man, every claim by the subject to know him involves a struggle for power."[59] To liberate the capacity for collective self-revision is therefore to insist that the set of power relations constituting the social body, including both its institutional carapace and the tissue of individual cells, be rendered open and transparent to itself. The experience of individual and collective empowerment has thus become a vital factor in the "progressive" evolution of the social life-process. As part of that experience, non-professional advocacy will ensure that legal discourse comes to mediate the conflict between individualized and

58. Mario Tronti, "Social Capital," *Telos* no. 17 (Fall 1973), p. 105; see also, Andrew Fraser, "The Corporation as a Body Politic," *Telos* no. 57 (Fall 1983); Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality. Vol. 1: An Introduction* (New York, 1980), p. 93; Unger, "Critical Legal Studies," p. 565.

59. Unger, *Knowledge and Politics*, p. 204.

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artificially stimulated instances of negativity and otherness, on the one hand, and the body of positively enacted collective norms, on the other, so as to the transcendent ideal of the social in its drive to attain ever-higher forms of life.

A legal order which restricts the exercise of power to the maintenance of collective norms will run the risk of technical stagnation. On the other hand, a legal order which empowers individuals to treat collective norms as mere instruments in the pursuit of their own selfish ends will, according to Simon, undermine the moral foundations of collective life.[60] One solution to that dilemma is to constitute the non-professional advocate as a kind of relay switch which allows the currents of power unimpeded access to both the individual and collective polarities of our social being, thereby moving closer to the modernist ideal of a pure and open-ended reflexivity built into the very structure of social life. The problem which remains for the rest of us is to find in that ideal of reflexivity and its oxymoronic offspring, the personal ethics of the non-professional advocate, anything more than an euphemistic effort to put the best possible face on the otherwise sordid reality of cultural and moral disintegration in late capitalist society.

Republicanism and Professional Ethics

Simon's ideal of non-professional advocacy amounts to a frontal assault on the republican tradition of legal professionalism. Within the republican tradition, the ethics of advocacy could never be conceived legitimately as a personal matter. For all those who regularly act as advocates, the ethics of advocacy would necessarily be a matter of public and common concern. To the republican lawyer, the practice of law would be understood, in Alasdair MacIntyre's terms, as a "form of socially established cooperative human activity through which goods internal to that activity are realised in the course of trying to achieve those standards of excellence which are appropriate to, and partially definitive of that form of activity." The goods associated with the practice of advocacy can only be achieved if new practitioners subordinate themselves "to the best standard so far achieved, and that entails subordinating [themselves] within the practice in [their] relationship to other practitioners."[61]

To offer an effective and authoritative guide to practitioners, any standard of excellence must be embedded in a living tradition. It is only "within the context of some traditional mode of thought" that a rational argument concerning the proper role and function of the professional advocate within a republican polity becomes possible. A tradition of practices, including the practice of advocacy, must, in turn, be sustained by some institution or set of institutions. Moreover, the integrity of a given practice and its capacity to engender respect for the virtues which enable us to achieve the goods internal to that practice must depend greatly upon the nature of the institution within which it is embedded. The virtues appropriate to the practice of republican advocacy

60. Simon, *op. cit.*, p. 84.
61. MacIntyre, *op. cit.*, pp. 175-178.

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will be "fostered by certain types of social institutions and endangered by others." The sort of institutional matrix out of which one could expect the virtuous advocate to emerge is one which situates the individual within "an historically extended, socially embodied argument . . . about the goods which constitute that tradition" of advocacy.[62]

That being so, one might also expect a republican legal profession to constitute itself as a body corporate and politic. Once it acquired that formal corporate identity, the profession could, not unreasonably, be regarded as "an association of persons formed with a view to some good purpose." The common life of the profession would then "be partly, but in a centrally important way, constituted by a continuous argument"[63] as to the nature of a republican legal profession and what should count as good advocacy. The consequence would be a legal profession possessed of a genuine political ethic and a distinctive mode of civic consciousness. A further consequence, of course, would be to make impossible the identification of the virtuous lawyer with the morally autonomous individual.

Unfortunately, that equation of the good lawyer with the morally sovereign individual has deep roots in the American past. The republican ethos has never managed to establish a secure institutional foothold in the American legal profession. In the ante-bellum era of revivalism and reform the tide of radical anti-institutionalism washed over the legal profession with a particularly destructive force. The formal constitution of the bar as a body corporate and politic was utterly inconceivable at a time when some state legislatures were prepared to insist that every citizen, twenty-one years of age or older, was entitled to be admitted to the practice of law merely upon proof of good moral character. The most that could be achieved towards the institutionalization of a tradition of republican advocacy was often the creation of a legal fraternity based on informal networks of social relationships. Such an "inner bar" might then resort to the device of professional ostracism to discourage those who insisted upon flouting professional traditions by entering the profession under statutes prescribing no oraminimal period of formal training.[64]

After the Civil War, the disembodied logic of capitalist expansion continued to erode the already weakened foundations for any genuine professional or corporate ethos among lawyers. As we have seen, the socialization of capital effectively destroyed the old propertied gentry class. By the late nineteenth century, members of the college educated liberal professions — law, medicine and the clergy — were practically the only surviving representatives of that vanishing gentry class. Gouldner, Auerbach and Magali Sarfatti Larson have all suggested that the efforts made by lawyers and doctors, in particular, to organize professional associations and establish a system of educational credentialling reflected a highly successful and prototypical attempt to

62. *Ibid.*, pp. 182, 206-207.
63. *Ibid.*, p. 206.
64. Alfred Z. Reed, *Training for the Public Profession of the Law* (New York, 1921), pp. 89-90.

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achieve incorporation into the new class system spawned by the rise of corporate capitalism. Larson suggests that the professionalizing project, which for lawyers involved the creation of the American Bar Association and the rise of the university law school, is typically oriented towards achieving both control over the market for professional services and also the conquest and assertion of social status for members of the profession. That quest for social status allegedly led professional organizations like the A.B.A. to develop strategies aimed at enhancing both the prestige and the income — the prime indicators of social status — of A.B.A. members.[65] Like Gouldner, Larson views the ideology of professionalism as a device employed by occupational groups in advanced capitalist societies to maximize their returns on the stock of cultural capital which belongs to them by virtue of an elaborate system of educational credentialling. That control over the accumulated stock of cultural capital supposedly then makes it possible for the New Class of professional intellectuals to undermine and challenge the hegemony of moneyed capital.

That analysis ignores the extent to which the American Bar Asssociation (and the system of legal education which it actively promoted) can be "best understood as part of a movement to defend the authority of a gentry class, whose sturdiest foundations lay in the professions."[66] Whatever autonomy the legal profession may have retained in relation to the capitalist interests which dominate the contemporary social economy it owes, not to its culture of critical speech, but rather to the determined efforts of nineteenth century republican lawyers to establish a professional ethos rooted in the tradition of civic humanism. Throughout the nineteenth century American lawyers had claimed that members of their profession were bound to observe a standard of morality which necessarily set them apart from the ordinary citizen. That view was given florid expression by George Sharswood when he asserted that "There is, perhaps, no profession, after that of the sacred ministry, in which a high-toned morality is more imperatively necessary than that of the law. There is certainly, without any exception, no profession in which so many temptations beset the path to swerve from the line of strict integrity; in which so many delicate and difficult questions of duty are continually arising. There are pitfalls and mantraps at every step, and the mere youth, at the very outset of his career, needs often the prudence and self-denial, as well as the moral courage, which belong commonly to riper years. High moral principle is his only safe guide; the only torch to light his way amidst darkness and obstruction."[67] That morality was the essential ingredient in the distinctive mode of civic consciousness associated with the practice of law.

By the end of the nineteenth century it had become painfully evident that a sustained commitment to high moral principle and civic virtue was not going to emerge as the spontaneous product of professional experience. Leaders of

65. Magali Sarfatti Larson, *The Rise of Professionalism: A Sociological Analysis* (Berkeley, 1977), pp. 166-167; Cf. Gouldner, *op. cit.* and Auerbach, *op. cit.*

66. Haskell, *op. cit.*, pp. 77-85.

67. George Sharswood, "An Essay on Professional Ethics," (1907) 32 *ABA Reports* (reprint of 1857 edition), p. 55.

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the legal profession expressed an anxious concern that "the trend of many is away from the ideals of the past and the tendency more and more to reduce our high calling to the level of a trade, to a mere means of livelihood or personal aggrandizement." In earlier times the sanction of professional ostracism had been "sufficient to keep from serious error the practioner with no fixed ideals of ethical conduct." Those days were gone. A new class of men had appeared for whom the good or bad esteem of their professional ostracism had been "sufficient to keep from serious error the practitioner with no fixed ideals of ethical conduct." Those days were gone. A new class of men had appeared for whom the good or bad esteem of their professional colleagues meant nothing "provided their itching fingers are not thereby stayed in their eager quest for lucre." The very future of the republic was now at risk. Only a formal code of ethics would be able to preserve the historical role of the legal profession as "the keystone of the republican arch of government. Weaken this keystone by allowing it to be increasingly subject to the corroding and demoralizing influence of those who are controlled by graft, greed and gain, or other unworthy motive, and sooner or later the arch must fall."[68]

But by adopting a formal code of ethics, the A.B.A. was, in effect, acknowledging that the mode of civic consciousness hitherto associated with the practice of law was in an advanced state of decay. The civic morality of the old republican legal profession had rested upon a traditional sense of honor, not upon a set of formally enacted rules.[69] It is a mistake to treat the ideal of civic

68. "Report of the Committee on the Code of Professional Ethics" (1906) 29 *ABA Reports* (Part 1), pp. 600-604.

69. Pierre Bourdieu, *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (tr. Richard Nice). (Cambridge, 1977), pp. 14-17. A *sense of honor* has been defined by Pierre Bourdieu as "disposition inculcated in the earliest years of life an constantly reinforced by calls to order from the group, that is to say, from the aggregate of the individuals endowed with the same dispositions, to whom each is linked by his dispositions and interests." The sense of professional honor which bound lawyers together during the ante-bellum period was rooted in a set of "customary rules." Like any system of customary law, the professional code of honor always seemed "to pass from particular case to particular case, from the specific misdeed to the specific sanction, never expressly formulating the fundamental principles which 'rational' law spells out explicitly (e.g. all men are equal in honor)." The "customary rules" of professional honor were the product of a small number of schemes of perception embodied in the bodily and psychological dispositions of such lawyers, enabling them "to generate an infinity of practices adapted to endlessly changing situations, without those schemes ever being constituted as explicit principles." As Bourdieu suggests, "Talk of rules, a euphemized form of legalism, is never more fallacious than when applied to the most homogeneous societies (or the least codified areas of differentiated societies) where most practices, including those seemingly most ritualized, can be abandoned to the orchestrated improvisation of common dispositions: the rule is never, in this case, more than a second-best intended to make good the occasional misfirings of the collective enterprise of inculcation tending to produce habitus that are capable of generating practices regulated without express regulation or any institutionalized call to order."

It was precisely the absence of a corporate public sphere within which the legal profession could both rationally articulate its own *raison d'etre* and also work out the practical implications of that rationale, that left a pre-political *code of honor* as the sole repository of the professional ethos. To give a professional ethos the normative force associated with a formal *code of law,* the legal profession would have to be recognized as a constituent element in the heterogeneous fabric of civil society. As things stand now, the effort to articulate that professional ethos amounts to little more than a ritualistic, morally barren, and practically ineffective invocation of the homilectic formulas which once expressed the spirit of a code of professional honor according to which much of what really counted in acquiring the virtues associated with the art of advocacy *went without saying.*

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morality inscribed in the A.B.A. code of ethics as a mere ideological "residue" which elite lawyers employed in the service of their professional "status project." Lawyers who urged the adoption of a professional code of ethics were not simply attempting to enhance their incomes and social prestige. The code of ethics reflected instead a defensive effort to check the corruption of that set of common dispositions which had formerly been anchored in an informal code of honor. One need not turn a blind eye to corruption, hypocrisy and ideological manipulation within the highest reaches of the corporate bar or the bench to credit the fear of corruption among elite lawyers. One does need to accept in good faith their desire to preserve certain norms of professional conduct in the face of the temptations generated by a runaway economy. Professional ethics may be more than a contradiction in terms. The effort to preserve an ideal of civic virtue as a feature of professional life should not be seen simply as an attempt to disguise "the potential venality of the transaction of services" or a reflection of the peculiar nature of the "professional commodity" sold by lawyers.[70] The historical mission of the A.B.A., as originally conceived, cannot be fully comprehended if one understands the association on the model of a "firm" or "enterprise" engaged in monopolizing behavior in the market for professional legal services. Such an analysis must miss the fundamentally important political dimension involved in the A.B.A's professional project. Lawyers, and especially elite lawyers, were determined to retain their role as guardians of a republican polity fast succumbing to a terminal case of corruption. Larson's purely "sociological analysis" remains blind to that essential dimension of legal professionalism in American.

Critical Jurisprudence and the Experimental Life

Authority now represents itself as the agent of society and has come to speak increasingly with a voice schooled in a reflexive and self-grounded culture of critical speech. But the fact that authority has become detached from a body of natural persons and lodged instead in a system has not necessarily entailed the abject acceptance of the socially pre-given. The reaction of progessive intellectuals to the disintegration of the nineteenth century republican polity has been, rather, to devise a method of conceiving the system as a certain kind of process, as a "structure — denying structure" whose deep logic is moved by the spirit of total criticism. Modernist intellectuals have been articulating that theme since the late nineteenth century. Lincoln Steffens, for example, asserted that social progress required that the "intellectual culture" of the old middle classes would have to give way to what he called the new "scientific culture." Writing in 1930, he declared that "We have to get rid of our old moral culture and learn the new culture, already here in science and in big business: what I call our experimental culture." That new culture would replace the old "logical" method with the "historical experimental method of 'seeing'." Christopher Lasch has summed up Steffen's position with the

70. Larson, *op. cit.*, pp. 220-221, 213, 216; see also Richard L. Abel, "Why Does the ABA Promulgate Ethical Rules" (1981) 59 *Texas Law Review* 639; Richard L. Abel, "Toward a Political Economy of Lawyers," (1981) *Wisconsin Law Review* p. 1117.

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remark that "Intelligence, in short, would have to replace virtue as the acknowledged aim of social life."[71]

That theme has been taken up again in the jurisprudential writing of the critical legal studies movement. Roberto Unger, for example, has discovered "in every aspect of society a continuation of politics by other means." The object of critical intelligence, therefore, is to place "the terms of life in common" within "the reach of the imagination and will." To recognize that it is all politics offers the hope "of enlarging democracy until all social life [has] been made experimental." The question confronting us is whether a critical jurisprudence infused with a modernist ethos, which is itself so clearly a product of bourgeois-Christian society, offers any substantial hope of overcoming the crisis within liberal bourgeois culture. Can the ideal of an experimental society no longer hostage to any particular substantive vision of the good ever replace or replenish traditional sources of meaning and purpose which have decayed or been destroyed?

So long as it remained a socially effective cultural belief system, the basis of a vital communal tradition, the Christian vision of universal human society and infinite personality could at least offer some support to interpretations which sought to overcome the contingencies of guilt, sickness and death. But we live in an age in which secular knowledge has become detached from traditional and religious world views. And because Unger and other legal modernists decline to counterbalance the painful and lonely contingencies of finite human existence with the hope of spiritual salvation held out by the Christian revelation, insisting that their moral vision must stand on its own philosophical merits, they, in effect, concede Habermas' point that "a theory that could interpret away the facticities of loneliness and guilt, sickness and death is, to be sure, not even *conceivable*."[72] Everything about human life, as experienced in modernist consciousness, is conditional and contingent. Any given experience of value or identity is open to conflict, contestation and even extinction. All "the social worlds that exist and have existed and will ever exist are conditional. They can fall apart or be torn apart." For legal modernists, no less than for bourgeois culture as a whole, "Contingencies that are irremovably attached to the bodily and moral constitution of the individual can be raised to consciousness only *as* contingency. We must in priniciple live disconsolately with them.[73]

Perhaps we need to ask again whether that disenchanted and disconsolate mood is, indeed, the only available rational response to the painfully contingent and finite dimension of our being. Is the only alternative to disenchantment Unger's surreptitious faith that the perfectionist impulse will come to fuel the life process of the species once that process has achieved liberation from the constraints of an assertedly "natural" necessity? Perhaps it is true that, in the absence of some such faith in the final reconciliation of

71. Lasch, *op. cit.*, pp. 272-273.

72. Habermas, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

73. Roberto Unger, Introduction to *Politics*. (Unpublished manuscript. Harvard Law School, 1981), p. 242; Habermas, *op. cit.*, p. 120.

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humanity and its God, we must, as individuals, remain disconsolate in the face of the unexpected, the unforeseen and the contingent. And yet we can also recall a time when at least some men possessed an apparently rational belief in their own capacity to impose a form and order upon a world otherwise governed by the vagaries of fortune. The creation of a public-political realm within which men could speak and act together in their collective capacity made possible that interplay between *virtù* and *fortuna* which "indicates a harmony between man and world." Within the classical republican tradition, *virtù* was conceived as the specifically political "response, summoned up by man, to the world, or rather to the constellation of *fortuna* in which the world opens up, presents and offers itself to him, to his *virtù*."[74] The great political act which gave birth to the American republic was one notable affirmation of the possibility that contingency could be mastered and overcome. The efforts of republican lawyers and judges to preserve the coherence and unity of that newly-created body politic throughout the nineteenth century represented yet another.

Critical legal scholars have treated the history of that republican tradition as an attempt to freeze time itself. They, on the other hand, have consistently sought to escape the constraints of time altogether. In that respect they do little more than echo ante-bellum advocates of codification who attacked the common law principle of *stare decisis* as a form of idolatry. Like Unger, one such lawyer declared that once Americans recognized their law for what it was, "a human, not a preternatural institution . . . it will advance with a free and unimpeded step towards perfection." Time itself could be conquered as the "stubborn forms" of the law were "taught to bend to the convenience and exigencies of the people for whose use it subsists. It will be separated from the rubbish and decay of time, and stripped of the parasitical growths that darken and disfigure it."[75]

Unlike the republican legal tradition which sought to preserve the forms which *virtù* had imposed upon the matter of *fortuna*, the critical legal studies movement now seeks to open up the world once more to the free play of contingency. That project is seen, not as the triumph of corruption over virtue, but rather as a progressive victory over the dead hand of tradition. In that modernist view, tradition is conceived "as an indefinite series of repetitions of an action, which on each occasion is performed on the assumption that it has been performed before; its performance is authorized . . . by the knowledge, or the assumption, of previous performance."[76] But the greatest of the republican lawyers in ante-bellum America managed to transcend the terms of the sterile and ahistorical debate between those who sought to freeze time and those striving to escape its constraints altogether. They understood that the

74. Hannah Arendt, *Between Past and Future* (New York, 1961), pp. 137-141.

75. William Sampson, "An Anniversary Discourse," in Perry Miller, ed., *The Legal Mind in America: From Independence to the Civil War* (Ithaca, 1969), p. 123. Unger is at one with the logic of modern capitalism in seeking the "abolition of duration." See, David Gross, "Time, Space and Modern Culture," *Telos* no. 50 (Winter 1981-82), p. 75.

76. J.G.A. Pocock, *Machiavellian Movement*, pp. 161, 207-208; *Id.; Politics, Language and Time: Essays on Political Thought and History* (New York, 1971), p. 237.

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task of preserving the coherence and unity of the republican polity was one which required the application of a sensitive and prudential judgement to the inescapable and unpredictable contingencies of civil and political life. Neither the mechanical identification of tradition with mere prescription nor the invocation of universal principles of justice could possibly displace the role played by the faculty of judgement itself in the performance of that task. Judges such as John Marshall and Joseph Story recognized that both law and society, and more particularly the *Novus Ordo Saeclorum* which emerged out of the American revolution, were products of human artifice wrought by men of virtue and intelligence. The survival of the republic could not depend upon the naturally given dispositions of the American people. While the foundations of the republic might have been erected upon the ground of natural reason, it was "built up and perfected by artificial doctrines adapted and moulded to the artificial structure of society." Like all products of human artifice, the body politic and the laws which preserve and protect it are designed to outlive us all by providing us with a common world more durable and less subject to the play of painful contingencies than our necessarily finite and precarious individual lives. The republican legal tradition in ante-bellum America derived its intellectual and moral force from a clear perception that societies "exist in time and conserve images of themselves as continuously so existing."[77] So long as the citizens of the American republic could preserve an image of an unbroken continuity stretching back to the foundation of the republic, so long, in other words, as they were able to renew the sources of the civic virtue which had made possible that founding act, the play of contingency could be mastered and overcome.[78]

Modernism begins, however, with the passionate embrace of indeterminancy, conceived as an emancipation from false necessity. Contingency no longer appears as a fact of life to be mastered and overcome. Rather, it represents the very essence of the life process. Moral discourse can no longer be solidly anchored by attaching it to the sort of authority which flows from a secure location in some part of a presumptively "natural" physical or social world. There is no such secure location. It is impossible to conceive any aspect of either inner or outer nature in terms of invariant or fixed essences. "Human nature," Unger asserts, "is no more rigidly defined than are the limits to the social worlds that people can imagine and construct." A sound theory of personality, according to Unger, must acknowledge "the indefinition of the person and of his core experiences." The identities of individuals are marked by "contested boundaries."[79]

77. Joseph Story, "Inauguration Discourse," in Miller, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184; Pocock, *Politics, Language and Time*, p. 233.

78. Faced with the novel temptations and moral uncertainties of a rapidly developing market economy many Americans living in the third decade of the 19th century had already come to fear that a material prosperity based on mobile forms of property would inevitably erode that civic virtue necessary to link the present to the pristine foundations of the Old Republic. Much of the rhetoric associated with the Jacksonian persuasion sought to restore that image of continuity. See, Marvin Meyers, *The Jacksonian Persuasion* (New York, 1960) and Fred Somkin, *Unquiet Eagle: Memory and Desire in the Idea of American Freedom, 1815-1860* (Ithaca, 1967).

79. Unger, "Introduction," p. 285.

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In their insistence that there are no fixed, natural boundaries capable of immunizing any aspect of the personality against transformative pressure, modernist lawyers echo the advocates of the androgynous ideal discussed in a recent article by Jean Bethke Elshtain. Like Unger, "*all* androgynists propound as an article of faith, an example of right reason, and an instance of scientific truth that human nature is more or less plastic." The ideal human being then is someone who has managed to transcend the limiting and contingent constraints imposed on personal identity by sex and gender differences.[80] The human body, for androgynists and Unger alike, is an object bearing only a contingent relationship to our identity as a human personality. And Unger in particular takes no account of how our existence as corporeal and temporal beings "bears powerful imperatives for how we come to know." That omission is a significant one since it does not seem far-fetched to suppose "that our knowing is essentially tied to our experience of ourselves as bodies." If that is so, "the mind and its activities must be conceived in a manner that is "tinged with spatiality is inseparably bound up with the fact of inhabiting *this* body at *this* particular time, it would seem that a philosophy which insisted upon the pure indeterminancy of human social and personal identity could only have the effect of objectivating one's body, thereby making it impossible even to conceive genuinely human relations with it. One could avoid that outcome only by recognizing that "The starting point of each and every human being is his or her particular location in space and time; this is, inescapably, the body."[81]

The modernist notion of the indefinition of human personality also blocks the possibility of intuitive access to relations of solidarity within groups or between individuals. That outcome is certainly not intentional. On the contrary, Unger claims that the contemporary experience of "cultural revolution" is transforming our ideas about love and marriage in a way that promises to lead to a significant deepening in our conception of community. Cultural revolutionary practice is an assertion of the transcendent character of the personal. The personal is transcendent because no particular social order can exhaust its store of possible and desirable meanings. By attacking the "naturalistic" principles which provide the underpinning for all fixed and hierarchical divisions of social roles, the modern cultural revolution has gone a long way towards overcoming the divided forms of subjectivity characteristic of the traditional patriarchal family. The practice of cultural revolution involves the purely negative process of attempting to emancipate people from the determ-

80. Jean Bethke Elshtain, "Against Androgyny," *Telos*, 47 (Spring 1981), p. 9. An explicit defense of the androgynous ideal has been offered by Frances Olsen. Like Clare Dalton (*op. cit.*) she seeks to ground critical legal thought in the romantic and irrationalist ideal of self-expression. Dalton believes that the dichotomy between self and other is part of the mystifying logic of reification; Olsen is similarly convinced that the growth of a deeper self-knowledge will reveal that gender differentiation, far from being immutable, "is contingent and subject to human control." The last stage in the historical process of deepening self-knowledge would be "the reclamation of the whole self" made possible only by the transcendence of the male/female dichotomy. Frances E. Olsen, "The Family and the Market: A Study of Ideology and Legal Reform," (1983) 96 *Harvard Law Review* 1497 at pp. 1570-71.

81. Elshtain, *op. cit.*, pp. 15, 12.

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ining background influence of some fixed division of social roles. An attempt is made to factor our the power element which gives social roles their determinate form.[82]

The naive optimism of legal modernists concerning the capacity of "cultural revolutionary practice" to emancipate the transcendent individual from the false necessities imposed by established sexual and social hierarchies and divisions calls to mind the evangelical Christian celebration of that divine love which holds the atoms of creation together. Just as the itinerant evangelical preachers of eighteenth century New England sought to liberate men from the coercive bonds of a stale institutional religion, Unger hopes to disentrench the power order which has crystallized within the patriarchal household. In both the estabished church and the patriarchal household, artificial boundaries and inherited relationships block the natural operation of the "affections." Unger shares the evangelical faith that it is the direct emotional intuition of (divine) love that ultimately binds us together in (holy) communion. Any form of the family or of the church which sets out to subordinate the demands of the heart to the "rational" exigencies of a civil or secular union will find itself not only beset by internal contradictions. It will also be diverted from the path of "True Virtue" by the idolatrous worship of an entrenched power order.[83]

But whatever modernists may claim, the collapse of the private sphere is the consequence, not of its own internal contradictions, but of the corrosive impact of a broad range of profesisonal, administrative and philanthropic interventions into the life of the family. Far from representing a semi-autonomous power order beset by internal contradictions, the family might now be better conceived as a field traversed by a network of force relations and shaped by a series of strategic interventions emanating from domains external to it.

The process that Unger heralds as cultural revolutionary practice cannot be divorced from the growing systemic need to map and nurture the sources of national strength. Once the apparatus of power took on the function of administering the life process of society, the conservation of children, among other things, became a major object of professional and administrative concern, with the result that the family soon began to lose its status as a semi-autonomous domain. Unger's cultural revolution might be understood better as an aspect of "the transition from a government of families to a government through the family." The family no longer stands within a zone of exclusivity guaranteed by the traditional logic of property. Instead, it has become "a relay, an obligatory or voluntary support for social imperatives, conforming to a process that did not consist in abolishing the family register but in exacerbating its existing tendencies [or "internal contradictions"], in exploiting to the maximum its advantages or disadvantages as perceived by its own members, so as to link together normative requirements and economico-moral

82. See, generally, Olsen, *op. cit.*
83. Cf. Heimert, *op. cit.*

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behaviors."[84]

The greater the degree to which the family becomes the object, if not the product of the technologies and strategies of power, the less likely it seems that the experiences of marriage and family life hold out hope for intuitive access to relations of solidarity with other persons. The sphere of family and private life will no longer be regulated according to the principle of exclusivity. The right to exclude outsiders remains the ultimate guarantee of privacy. But critical jurisprudence seeks to dissolve the wall of privacy surrounding the family and to govern its internal life according to the contractual principle of choice and the political principle of equality. The critical legal studies movement would reduce the family to a dependent variable in the network of strategic alliances which constitute the map of power within the contemporary corporate welfare state. Like "the liberalization and valorization of the family that occurred at the end of the nineteenth century," Unger's projected transformation of personal relations should be understood "not as the triumph of modernity, the profound mutation of sensibilities," but rather as "the strategic result" of "philanthropic" interventions into the life of the family. Armed with Unger's system of destabilization rights, those interventions will aim to break up any "area of institutional life and social practice that run contrary to the scheme of the new-modeled constitution."[85]

There is something profoundly ambiguous and more than a little frightening in that vision of "a society cracked open to politics." Unger claims to see society as an essentially moral association of human personalities. He describes freedom, for example, as an overcoming of the apparent conflict between self-assertion and attachment to others. But does Unger's vision of our collective and individual progress toward the "ideal of the social," toward a higher level of collective and moral development, correspond to the real history of "the social"? More specifically, what does the real history of "the social" tell us about the fate of any real political ethic? It is clear first of all that "the social" is not society understood as the set of "material and moral conditions that characterize a form of consolidation," as Unger would have it. Instead, "It would appear to be rather the set of means which allow social life to escape material pressures and politico-moral uncertainties; the entire range of methods which make the members of a society relatively safe from the effects of economic fluctuations by providing a certain security."[86] The work of critical legal scholars now provides a powerful illustration of the extent to which that representation of "the social" has become "the grid of intelligibility" through which alone we can hope to grasp the meaning of human experience. The "ideal of the social" has become "the yardstick by which political discourses will measure or oppose one another, but also the basis on which they will try to start afresh when its realization has effaced the charm of old promises."[87]

84. Jacques Donzelot, *The Policing of Families* (New York, 1979), p. 92; see also Christopher Lasch, *Haven in a Heartless World: The Family Besieged* (New York, 1979).

85. Donzelot, *op. cit.*, p. 58; Unger, "Critical Legal Studies Movement," p. 612.

86. Unger, "Introduction," p. 67; Donzelot, *op. cit.*, pp. xxvi.

87. Foucault, *op. cit.*, p. 93; Donzelot, *op. cit.*, p. xxvi.

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The vision of a society no longer hostage to itself is not far removed from the spirit of earlier celebrations of the power of positive thinking. The central task facing the contemporary corporate welfare state is the conquest of scarcity. It follows that the goal of political and social life within the modern nation-state is not freedom, but abundance. The vision of liberation shining in the eyes of Roberto Unger and his acolytes within the critical legal studies movement has even less to do with the foundation of political freedom. For them, the capacity to overcome the fundamental contradictions plaguing the legal order must be lodged, if it is to be found anywhere, in the inner structural dynamic propelling the social system into the future.

To identify the goal of politics as "the making and unmaking of society" necessarily entails the repudiation of the republican claim that the power of the people must be grounded in some "stable worldly structure that houses, as it were, their combined power of action."[88] In place of such structures, the critical legal studies movement offers "the hope of making something new of our experience." Freedom is to be grounded, not in the enduring structures of the body politic, but in the power to disrupt or transcend every imaginable form of social life. The transformative power of the imagination becomes manifest in a vision of psychic abundance: "Who knows what the people we might be tomorrow would imagine for their own tommorrows." Unfortunately, that hope of spiritual plenitude cannot easily be disentangled from the pervasive reality of a cretinized mass society within which "the wish for plenty" tends to appear, not as "the wish to have one's wishes fulfilled," but rather, as "the wish not to have to wish wishes of one's own at all."[89]

In that context, Unger's negative capability presents itself as an artificial device designed to breathe new life into an over-administered corporate welfare state no longer able to mold the social world in its own formally rational image. The alternative image of a society "cracked open to politics" would serve not just the systemic goals of economic growth and social change. The hope clearly is that it might also generate a renewed sense of historic mission among all those legal professionals fated to become the cultural shock troops of the corporate welfare state.

The Hope of the Future

Critical jurisprudence calls into question the very possibility of a stable collective or personal identity. Given that view, it becomes practically impossible to ask the question: who are "we" and how are "we" to recognize and create a genuinely critical and emancipatory legal discourse? Certainly the mere fact that we are intellectuals or lawyers does not automatically predispose us towards emancipatory action — unless we choose to identify what it means to be an intellectual or lawyer with a pre-given political role. The critical legal studies movement approaches the question of political reform as if it were "logically prior to everything else." In doing so, it has succumbed to

88. Hannah Arendt, *On Revolution* (Harmondsworth, 1973), p. 175.

89. Dalton, op. cit., pp. 241-243; Donald Meyer, *The Positive Thinkers: A Study of the American Quest for Health, Wealth and Personal Power From Mary Baker Eddy to Norman Vincent Peale*, (Garden City, N.Y., 1966), p. 189.

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what Benjamin Ginzburg, writing for *The New Republic* in 1931, called "the anti-intellectualism of the American intellectual, who is overawed by the practial sweep of American life." In its efforts to be ultra-realistic, modernist lawyers have thrown up a subjectivisitic interpretation of reality which transforms political action "into a sort of personal salvation." For Unger, that hope of salvation has been cruelly denied by the perverse indifference of a legal academy, which, "like a priesthood that had lost their faith and kept their jobs," still stands "in tedious embarassment before cold altars."[90]

But the critical legal studies movement errs profoundly when it seeks salvation through political solutions to problems that are not political but cultural. If the principle of subjective value implies that we have lost our sense of values, we cannot recover those lost meanings "by betting on some plan of economic or political action; it is rather by clarifying our sense of values that we ensure intelligent political action." To stake "individual freedom entirely on a realization of political reform" can lead only to a kind of political messianism "which stakes everything on the hope of the future." But, as Ginzburg pointed out over fifty years ago, it is possible to begin instead "with the affirmation of moral and intellectual freedom in the present" thereby making the goal of politics "the extension of the range of freedom in the future."[91] Such an experience of moral and intellectual freedom can, in the nature of things, only be realized within the framework of institutions rooted in the here and now.

For Duncan Kennedy and Roberto Unger, however, any effort to conceive existing institutions as associations of persons formed with a view to some good purpose represents little more than a transparent ploy designed to immunize such institutions against transformative conflict. Precisely because no institution on the model of an Aristotelian polity could "emerge from present reality as the outcome of any plausible sequence of political transformation and conceptual adjustments" the very image of such an "idealized communal republic" is said to confirm "the power of the established order in the very act of pretending to deny it."[92] The hope of freedom must therefore be staked on a program of political action. A striking example of that anti-institutional tendency to stake everything on the hope of the future can be found in Duncan Kennedy's "Utopian Proposal" for the reform of the Harvard Law School curriculum. Kennedy's recommendations fall under two headings: one set of proposals is directed at the creation of a new model curriculum; the other set seeks to establish the law school as a "counter-hegemonic enclave." Both branches of the proposal reflect both the sense of impotence in the face of the practical sweep of American life and the ingrained anti-intellectualism of the American Left intellectual. Kennedy never questions the prevailing assumption that the major objective of the law school curriculum should be to equip the law student with the sort of skills and clinical experience necessary to the practice of law. Nor does he find it possible to

90. Lasch, *New Radicalism*, pp. 292-295; Unger, "Critical Legal Studies Movement," p. 675.
91. Lasch, *New Radicalism*, pp. 292-295.
92. Unger, "Critical Legal Studies Movement," p. 602.

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conceive the objects of practical training apart from a program of political action. Alongside an allegedly "practical" training in doctrinal "manipulation" and clinical experience his new model curriculum would offer an interdisciplinary course "formally distinguished" into left and right political streams. Kennedy simply takes it for granted that the materials of history, jurisprudence, economics, sociology and so on, must be approached with an already developed political perspective in mind.[93] The possibility that legal scholarship might be conceived as an end in itself altogether apart from its relevance to a program of political action or the demands of legal practice is not even raised, much less seriously considered.

To conceive legal scholarship as a legitimate end in itself would be to open up the possibility that Harvard Law School, like any other academic community, might constitute itself in such a way as to serve those scholarly values to the exclusion of other, more political or ostensibly practical, concerns. Professional law schools in America have rarely represented anything that would be recognizable as a community of scholars. One may be sure that they never will, unless critical legal scholars cease to imagine that their role is to train radical lawyers and seek instead to constitute an autonomous tradition of legal scholarship. The cultivation of the virtues appropriate to legal scholarship as a worthwhile activity in its own right will continue to be neglected so long as conservative and radical law teachers alike regard themselves as bound to satisfy the manpower requirements of their respective factional groupings within the legal profession. That subordination of scholarly values to the supposedly more practical task of preparing radical lawyers is all the more surprising given the fairly obvious fact that, whatever else law schools might be able to do, they certainly cannot teach people how to practice law, much less give them a concrete appreciation of what it means to be a "good lawyer." That is a function which, by its very nature, should become the corporate responsibility of the legal profession itself. Critical legal scholars should insist that the legal profession assume that responsibility, thereby freeing the law schools to pursue the goods internal to the practice of scholarship.

But to conceive the law school as another republican association of persons formed with a view to some particular good purpose is to locate the possibility of freedom in the here and now. That vision runs head-on into Kennedy's political messianism which leads him to judge the law school solely as a source of "illegitimate hierarchy and alienation." The law school as a "counter-hegemonic enclave" seeks to detach authority — including moral and intellectual authority — from natural persons. Academic talent or a committment to the life of scholarship would therefore have to be replaced as legitimate criteria for admission to the academic community of the law school. Instead, "There should be a test designed to establish minimal skills for legal practice and then a lottery for admission to the school; there should be quotas

93. Duncan Kennedy, "Legal Education and the Reproduction of Hierarchy: A Polemic Against the System." (Unpublished paper, 1981), pp. 82 ff. Portions of this paper have been published as an article, "Legal Education as Training for Hierarchy," in Kairys, *op. cit.*

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within the lottery for women, minorities and working class students." In other words, the admission practices of the law school should be tailored so as to serve the political "goal of modifying the social composition of the Bar."[94] Clearly a body of students and faculty selected through a system of lotteries and quotas could only communicate with each other in the disembodied and de-contextualized language of crititical speech (if, indeed, they had anything at all to say to each other).

The critical legal studies movement owes its vision of emancipation to the emergence of a culture of critical speech which de-authorizes every traditional form of social and political authority. Unger understands that development as a process of "cumulative insight," as a consequence of which "the formative order of social life" has been "deprived of some of its halo of naturalness and necessity."[95] But the disintegration of those traditional forms of authority does not automatically and necessarily lead to the experience of human emancipation. Indeed, as Adorno and Horkheimer have reminded us, the dialectic of enlightenment which generates the ideal of the self-reflexive culture of critical discourse has remained fundamentally "tied to domination, as both its reflection and its tool." The "self-dominant intellect . . . separates from sensuous experience" only "in order to subjugate it."[96] If that is so, one might continue to view the emergence of a fully reflexive intelligentsia, "emancipated" from the constraints imposed by fixed social roles as an expression of the one-dimensional logic of an advanced capitalist society which encourages "an immediate identification of the individual with *his* society and through it, with the society as a whole." Once domination takes the form of a sophisticated, scientific system of social administration the function of reason, according to Marcuse, is to encourage "submission to the facts of life, and to the dynamic capability of producing more and bigger facts of the same sort of life. The efficiency of the system blunts the individual's recognition that it contains no facts which do not communicate the represssive power of the whole. If the individuals find themselves in the things which shape their life, they do so, not by giving, but by accepting the law of things — not the law of physics but the of their society."[97]

Conclusion

The critical legal studies movement regards the law as a transcendent body of *social* norms. It is through the invocation and renewed articulation of those norms in the light of personal needs and experience that the process of individuation will (and should) take place, according to the modernist credo. The ideal of law, conceived as a fruitful tension between the universal and particular, the altruistic and the individualistic, becomes the primary locus of

94. *Ibid.*

95. Unger, "Critical Legal Studies Movement," p. 582.

96. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (tr. John Cumming), (London, 1973), pp. 36-37.

97. Herbert Marcuse, *One Dimensional Man: Studies in the Ideology of Advanced Industrial Society* (Boston, 1966), pp. 10-11.

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human identity. A discourse which conceives the law as a transcendent body of social norms must abandon the ancient conception of law as a means of marking the boundary between the private and public realms. The individuation of the human subject within the framework of a body of transcendent norms reflecting the socializing logic of capital offers no real hope of meeting the crisis of meaning and purpose developing within our civilization. A recovery of meaning and purpose is possible for us only through a form of legal discourse which recognizes that a clear distinction between public and private is essential to a freely developing democratic public life.

How can we begin to reconstitute autonomous spheres of private and public life in the face of a capitalist economy and state which have fused to locate the source of all normativity in the needs of an expanding and apparently limitless social body? The first step towards such a positive program of institutional reconstruction would be to rescue the republican tradition in American legal thought from the historical limbo to which it has been relegated by the partisans of legal and cultural modernism. Perhaps by so doing we may find the means to resist the further erosion of both the private-familial and the public-political spheres in the name of social efficiency and progress. A rich, various and moral human identity demands both "the continuing presence of specific beloved others" in the private-familial sphere and a public sphere in which we can act, as citizens, in common with others to articulate and realize a set of shared values. The discourses and forms of speech appropriate to familial and political life, respectively, can and should be distinguished from a legal discourse concerned to preserve the integrity and autonomy of both private and public experience. As Jean Bethke Elshtain has observed: "To affirm a vision of the private-familial [or of the public] sphere as having its own dignity and purpose is to insist that particular experiences and spheres of social relations exude their own values and purposes, and have ends not attainable by, or within, other spheres. To assert the continual necessity of such relations and a particular notion of their reconstructed vitality is to recognize that we are all impoverished if all of life falls under a single set of terms. It is to adopt a perverse version of the Platonic expistemology that calls for other ways of seeing to be suppressed, literally exiled, or taken as inferior when compared with a supreme, powerful way of seeing beyond and above everyday human existence."[98]

The all-pervasive logic of socialized capital has dissolved the boundary between private and public spheres and left in their place a disembodied culture of critical discourse which effectively transvalues fundamental questions of meaning, purpose and identity into problems of social order and social development. The real problem facing us is one of restoring the precarious balance between public and private experience without conditioning participation in public life and identifying autonomous individuality with restrictive and exclusive forms of property ownership. That problem persists

98. Jean Bethke Elshtain, *Public Man, Private Woman: Women in Social and Political Thought*, (Princeton, 1981), pp. 329, 334-335.

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precisely because our moral identity is rooted in pattern of practical intersubjectivity which cannot be reduced to the autonomous and instrumental logic of a system of socialized value production without threatening the very foundation of that identity. It may be said, therefore, that the hope of emancipation lies in our willingness to confront anew the problem of regenerating stable, well-ordered and virtuous republican polities within the corrupt and decaying body of Anglo-American civilization. It is not inconceivable that the vision of a regenerated republican polity may yet turn out to be a more "realistic" solution to the "fundamental contradictions" of our social being than a form of critical legal discourse that stands so much in fear of any stable or enduring source of authority that it abandons altogether the hope of achieving real emancipation in the here and now. If so, radical lawyers and Left intellectuals may find that they have much to learn from those who once championed a conservative republican ethos grounded in the "traditional logic of property" against a socially corrosive and spiritually empty process of capitalist rationalization. A genuine legal realism need not necessarily involve an abject capitulation to the disembodied, de-contextualized, and de-personalized logic of total administration. The lottery is a poor substitute for the *polis*.

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THE NEW BLACK ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

by Earl Picard

Throughout the twentieth century black economic development strategies have been hampered by a failure to address the basic liberatory impulse of the black community. By that I mean there has been a disjunction between the essential developmental seeds of the community, many of which can be spelled out in fairly precise terms, and the programs and achievements of economic development strategists. This problem is demonstrated in the long-standing wretched conditions faced by the majority of black people[1] and in the abundance of marginal programs, projects and institutions that serve more to mollify than to develop. The absence of a truly liberatory strategy is obscured in part by the general cacophony about alternatives and the pervasive opportunism and malaise among would-be strategists and doers.

Though these observations are not seriously challenged by well-meaning members of the black community, wide diversity does exist as to the actual character of black oppression and on the question of how to ameliorate the unsatisfactory circumstances faced by black people. Indeed, it is necessary to add that even the use of the term "oppression" to describe the black condition is not accepted uniformly.

Many of the problems faced by blacks are reflections of the generalized economic difficulties that beset the world community. Others are related more particularly to the structural crisis of the capitalist system. Yet, at a more fundamental level, we might say that black oppression is compounded by the fact that blacks as a group have become increasingly obsolete to the American economy. This last observation is of critical importance because blacks have not developed a strategy, not even a short-term strategy, that moves from this assumption and attempts to address the profound structural problems confronting black people. Thus, I would contend that at the base of all the black community's difficulties lies the problem of economic development strategy.

1. In general the problems of the black community turn on impoverishment, emiseration, dispossession and unemployment. For treatments of the above concerns and more, see the following: National Urban League, *The State of Black America: 1983* (New York, 1983); *The Social and Economic Status of the Black Population in the United States, 1974,* published by the Bureau of the Census (Washington, 1975); John Cogan, "The Decline of Black Teenage Employment: 1950-70," *The American Economic Review*, 72:4 (September 1982), pp. 621-637; Walter B. Allen, "The Social and Economic Status of Black Women in the United States," *Phylon,* 42:1 (Spring 1981), pp. 26-40; "The Black Elderly," *The Black Scholar*, 13:1 (1982); Melvin L. Oliver and Mark A. Glick, "An Analysis of the New Orthodoxy on Black Mobility," *Social Problems,* 29:5 (June 1982), pp. 511-523; Phillip J. Bowman, *et al.,* "Joblessness and Discouragement among Black Americans," *Economic Outlook USA,* 9:4 (Autumn 1982), pp. 85-88; "Black America: Progress and Problems," *Morgan Guaranty Survey* (August 1981), pp. 10-15.

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The conditions black face did not occur by happenstance. Rather, they are the culmination of a clear set of socio-historical circumstances and situational determinants that together led the strategies that had been advanced to be marked by (a) misdirected foci; (b) a consistent failure to address long-standing developmental assumptions; (c) crippling pragmatic considerations; (d) undue dependence on external intervention as a means to activate developmental strategies; and (e) closure around an ever-narrowing set of interests. The upshot of it all is that the conditions of the black community have continued to deteriorate in the face of an ongoing flurry of developmental activities.

While this is not the place to examine the entire corpus of such strategies as have been advanced or to recount the litany of criticisms made against them, it is my premise that current strategies will fare no better primarily because they too are burdened with the same structures that resulted in the failure of earlier efforts. My intention is to examine one of the currently prominent efforts, which I identify as the corporate intervention strategy. This strategy is the centerpiece of an overall program with identifiable spokespersons, an analytical perspective, a coherent if inchoate program, and a clearly stated scenario for realizing its objectives. To that extent it can be considered an economic development strategy and thus can be subjected to systematic scrutiny.

Here I examine the corporate intervention strategy to determine the specific analytical and historical groups that are used to articulate ideals, substantiate claims, mobilize action and communicate with a designated population. I also assess that strategy from the standpoint of demands, tactics, potentialities, accomplishments and interests. Finally, I focus on its stated and actual significance, and evaluate the strategy's theoretical soundness as a means to self-reliance and economic development.

The corporate intervention strategy can be seen in the highly publicized but only marginally effective boycotts launched against major American corporations, especially the one against Anheuser-Busch. It is also embodied in the various covenants and contracts entered into by Coca-Cola, 7-Up, Heublin (Kentucky Fried Chicken), Walt Disney Studios and Burger King on one side, and civil rights organizations such as the NAACP and PUSH on the other. This strategy is given legitimacy by way of a long list of endorsements from civil rights personalities, politicians, media stars, and would-be leaders of every stripe. In the fashion of the advertising industry, it is exemplified in the slogan: "From Public Aid to Private Trade."

Commenting on this phenomenon in a recent *New York Times* article, Sheila Rule suggested that the strategy is being advanced to achieve the goals of self-reliance and economic development for blacks. Proponents have themselves asserted that claim.[2] Rule centered her discussion on the resurgence of the

2. A listing of some relevant citations would include Don Wycliff, "Black Leaders Stress Self-Help," *Chicago Sun-Times*, July 25, 1982; James B. Stewart, "The Emerging Economic Development Program of the NAACP," *Crisis*, 87:5 (May 1980), pp. 166-168; Jacqueline Thomas, "Boycott Revived as a 'Tool of Liberation,'" *Chicago Sun-Times*, December 12, 1982, Jesse Jackson,

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boycott as an economic weapon and the shift away from a focus on the liberal welfare state as a vehicle for addressing the black condition. There has been increasing coverage of this phenomenon in the popular press,[3] but little of it takes the form of analysis of the strategy's implications and viability.[4]

The Corporate Intervention Strategy

The corporate intervention strategy becomes visible when the dominant economic development strategy begins to meet serious resistance and the leading edge of supply side economics emerges. It is a direct response to the inherent and contemporary limitations of the state intervention strategy. This latter strategy is premised on the assumption that the state, through its abilities to intervene affirmatively in economic matters, is the primary vehicle for developing the black community. The new approach is not considered a replacement for the state intervention strategy. Rather, it is seen as a complement, albeit one that is spurred on by the increase in government phaseouts, cutbacks and rising popular opposition to affirmative action. In other more subtle ways, though, the new strategy does represent important economic and socio-political transformations that make it even more problematical than its predecessor.

The corporate intervention strategy affirms a basic racial definition of subjectivity inasmuch as it argues that the material life-world of blacks is fundamentally defined by race. This observation is not so much a call to arms or affirmation of an unalterable condition as it is a statement of historical fact. The focus on racial subjectivity is necessary because of the legacy of slavery, and also because of the continued existence of ingrained racism in the American psyche and in its institutions and practices. The limits of reconstruction, segregation and the civil rights era are cited as indications of a basic indisposition on the part of America to do anything meaningful for its citizens of African descent.

Central to the strategy is the premise that blacks are an oppressed caste and that their oppression is systematic. Subtle distinctions do appear later in the analysis, but the common starting point is the understanding that there are characteristics that bind blacks together as an organic community and that those are basically defined by race. As Jesse Jackson asserts, "the black community is an identifiable community set aside by caste and color, and though

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interview, "The Economy and the Blacks," *Firing Line*, July 13, 1982; *Push Expo '73. Black Consumer Profile: An Exploration of Consumer Dynamics, Media Usage Patterns, Life Style Characteristics and Demographics* (Chicago, 1974), preface.

3. See for instance Johnnie I. Roberts, "Threatening Boycotts, PUSH Wins Gains for Blacks," *Wall Street Journal*, July 21, 1982; Irwin Ross, "PUSH Collides with Busch," *Fortune* (November 15, 1982), pp. 90-97; Jay Pridemore and Ethel L. Payne, "The PUSH/COCA-COLA Covenant One Year Later," *Dollars & Sense*, 8:3 (August-September, 1982), pp. 152-159; and Sheila Rule, "Turning Back the Clock to Move Ahead," *New York Times*, August 8, 1982.

4. Wycliff does raise questions but they are queries that flow from the logic of the strategy. The *Fortune* article cited above is almost derisive in its evaluation. An editorial in the Atlanta morning paper is downright provocative in its ready grasp of the conservative implications of the strategy. See Dick Williams, "Reverend Jesse Jackson's Surprising Secret," *The Atlanta Constitution*, December 12, 1982.

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there are variations in our community — various class distinctions sometimes born of color, sometimes born of education, sometimes born of economic mobility — the fact is our caste is the most dominant factor in our lives."[5]

While the general air of the corporate intervention strategy is one of indignation, proponents ceaselessly affirm a commitment to basic American values and champion patriotism and unswerving loyalty. A tactical necessity is to insure high visibility for those aspects of black existence that most graphically indicate the blighted conditions faced by black people. A continuing appeal is then made to "America" to fulfill its moral obligations to the former slaves. In the same vein, the corporate intervention strategy employs DuBoisian protest, classical liberal moralism, the long-suffering character of blacks and their "forgivingness" as props in its analytical schema. Hence, the particular aspects of black history that are highlighted and the analytical props that are employed provide critical insight into the character of this strategy. As the scenario moves away from the slave experience and caste commonality, the quest for analytical unity becomes more difficult.

In the flagging but still present state intervention strategy, the general socioeconomic and political conditions of the black community were used to stimulate demands for developmental activity. Consequently, broad numbers of people were affected — some as intermediaries, some as recipients. Obviously, the benefits were not distributed evenly or on the basis of a criterion of need. What is more, the problems that spawned state interventionist initiatives still persist and gross waste was and is widely in evidence. However, it is still accurate to say that there was a certain definite focus on group-based problems.

In the new corporate intervention strategy, the oppressed black community is replaced by the consuming black community. The condition of blacks is less important to this strategy than is their level of consumer spending. Where previously moral suasion, passive and not so passive resistance, and abject circumstances were necessary to activate state interventionist activities, consumer power activates the corporate intervention strategy. Such spending is purported to run into the tens of billions of dollars. Some have placed the figure at $175 billion.[6] This is said to be a unified, mobilizable market segment that, as one advocate maintains, should use its "common economic strength as a basis for renegotiating basic economic relationships with the corporate sector."[7] Blacks can employ their buying power as a wedge against corporate America. Additionally, blacks continue to muster still other resources in the face of ongoing efforts to undermine their economic viability. Among these are academic skills, economic power and "acumen." The critical resource, however, is black power measured in terms of consumer spending.

Crisis, the organ of the NAACP, has devoted substantial efforts to making

5. Jesse Jackson interview, *op.cit.*
6. "The New Black American," *Blackbook International Reference Guide: 1983* (Chicago, 1983), p. 3.
7. Jesse Jackson interview, *op.cit.*

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the case for heightened consumer consciousness, as has *Dollars & Sense* and other outlets for the strategy's articulators. They argue consistently that corporations have to make more of an effort to promote development among black Americans. This would not be charity, they say, but a mutually beneficial practice. As the strategists note, the consumer dollar is the most telling example of blacks' importance to general economic well-being and in itself is sufficient power to command the attention of corporate America.

PUSH President Jesse Jackson has gone one step further in employing a political analogy to highlight the centrality of this new power. "When shopping," he says, blacks "understand that their purchase is a vote in the economic marketplace."[8] This analogy is flawed for two reasons. First, because of the commodified character of politics that leaves the voter open to manipulation and sublimation. It is politics that imitates the consumer world, and not vice versa. In another sense, this analogy reduces the subject to its essential existence as a solitary unit, the isolated individual. This "Cartesian" twist means that significance is derived from aggregating the individual voters/consumers into numerically significant sets. What we see here is an implicitly positivist theory of knowledge and an instrumental theory of man, both of which are offensive and oppressive. More can be said on the role of analogical reasoning in the corporate intervention strategy, but it is appropriate at this juncture to make an observation on the quality of the political economy at work here. What I see haunting the corporate intervention strategy is the ghost of Adam Smith. How then does that theory come into play and what are its implications?

Consumer Economics

The theoretical implications of the effort to focus on the black consumer market locate the strategy squarely within the realm of exchange relations. It is at the level of relating the black community to the American economy as the faceless, formless consumer — the inexorable victim in market exchange relations — that the lapse occurs. For in this economy one must first of all generate income in order to function as an effective consumer. From the standpoint of economic theory the important concerns flow from relations in the social and productive sphere. The logically prior question of the black community's relation to the general socio-economic order is subordinated. By locating the analysis in the realm of exchange relations the corporate intervention strategy is unable to comment on the character and quality of the productive contribution that blacks make to the overall economy. At the same time and for the same reason, it obscures the source of the dollars to be used in consumption. The strategy focuses on consumer habits without concern for any effects it may have on capital formation and mobilizability. Strategists proclaim the importance of this approach for stimulating economic development, yet no specifics are given as to the form that development will take. Thus, rather than confront the more telling question of increasing black

8. *Ibid.*

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marginality in America's productive structure, proponents instead resort to a caricature of Adam Smith's exchange theory of value.

This is a major departure. Unlike analyses of slavery or of the segregation era when black productive status was central, proponents of the new development strategy seek to show how blacks relate to the present configuration of the U.S. economy because the conceptual prism through which they filter their information dequalifies that concern. With unemployment rife, affirmative action under siege and a general air of insecurity abounding, an analysis that locates the major concerns in the productive sector would have to come to far more unsettling conclusions about the importance of black people to the American economy, about blacks' true development needs, and about the basic focus of the black struggle. Yet those questions can never be confronted adequately through a conceptual framework that defines the agent as an actor in the exchange relations, an object that is increasingly alienated and manipulated.

Corporate America conceives of blacks as free, independent consumption units. While corporate leaders concede that in many cases blacks manifest certain particular characteristics, rarely do they admit that those characteristics are compelling enough to serve as a power base. As a market segment, blacks are more a statistical aggregate than an identifiable collectivity. The effort to attach material significance to what is essentially an abstraction or to impute to it political and social will is an exercise in reification. Except in those carefully controlled cases where a response is elicited, it is not expected that the consumer will react to or bargain with the corporation. Indeed, corporations are much more adept at mobilizing consumers than consumers (or brokers) are at mobilizing themselves. Similarly, by accepting and extending the logic of the classical economic paradigm, the corporate intervention strategy must come ultimately to see that the claimed economic resources that flow from education and skills are also of little significance as a power base since, for the most part, the persons embodying those qualities enter the economy as independent contractors with corporate America.

Analogical Reasoning and Received Theory

Two general tendencies can be discerned in these efforts. One is the tendency to undertake analysis through the use of analogies. The other is the tendency to employ received theories. The analogical approach begins by admitting that there are few parallels for the black American experience. Nevertheless, selected analogies are drawn from the colonial model and a general effort is made to equate the black community's status to that of developing nation-states. This is not an entirely new twist. Indeed, in 1969, a precursor of the current generation of strategists, Whitney M. Young, late head of the National Urban League, employed a nation-state analogy when he described black America as an "economically underdeveloped country."[9] Others representing various tendencies on the political spectrum have also resorted to

9. Whitney M. Young, "The Split-Level Challenge" in *Saturday Review*, August 23, 1969.

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this particular device because, indeed, there are striking similarities. Yet, now the corporate intervention strategy takes the colonial/nation-state analogy one step further by generating gross national product (GNP) and trade figures and by comparing the black American "economy" to those of bona fide independent countries. As one wag notes, in 1981 black America's "earnings supercede the gross national product of all but six of the world's countries, up from our former position of 10th place."[10]

This is a perspective that is also advanced in a forceful manner by Jesse Jackson. He takes the analogy to new levels in his effort to include balance of payments figures, trade and aid concerns: "There ought to be reciprocal trade. There ought to be a balance of trade . . . . Last year we bought $14 billion worth of autos, and yet we have begun to look at the record. . . , seeking to reassess the relationship; and we find that Chrysler (engaged in) $7½ billion in sales, $3 billion in procurement, less than $20 million worth of trade with blacks. It should have been a minimum of $1.5 billion. General Motors, $30 billion in procurement. It should have been $3 billion minimum for blacks; it was less than $300 million. That $5 billion trade deficit alone has left us either disproportionately on public aid or in desperation."[11]

When the veneer is stripped away, gross national product and trade figures become mere abstractions attempting to lend unity to what are largely unrelated transactions entered into by free, naked consumers. The mythical GNP largely consists of wages and income, most of which is unmobilizable because it is committed to current consumption.[12]

Although there is a demand for fair trade, no effort is made to suggest what its terms will be or what in fact will be traded. We are left to determine that by implication. Trade, as understood from the standpoint of the corporate intervention strategy, is defined as a standard buyer-seller relation. It is everyday capitalist exchange. In this relation, the black community has no tangible products to exchange with the corporate sector: there is no trade, as such, when only one party to the transaction has products to offer. What is conceptualized as trade is in reality consumption; an expression of the abject economic dependence of black Americans. In this they are on equal footing with all other consumers and have no compelling basis for raising demands.

While the nation-state analogy engenders a certain level of interest, it has been a contradictory formulation because of the absence of an identifiable land area on which to base a claim to nationhood. Some proponents adhere to the nation-state analogy but simultaneously refuse to break with mainstream thought or to challenge its political, economic and ideological foundations that serve to perpetuate black oppression. Where normally the logic of the

10. Curtis E. Rodgers, "Operation Fair Share Points the Way," in *Crisis*, 89:3 (March 1982), pp. 6-9; see also in that issue Cleveland A. Chandler, "The Size of the Black Economy," pp. 10-11.

11. Jesse Jackson, interview, *op.cit.*

12. The following works implicitly confirm the extent to which the black consumer is constrained. Alan R. Anderson, *The Disadvantaged Consumer* (New York, 1975); Fred D. Sturdivant, *The Ghetto Marketplace* (New York, 1969); Marcus Alexis, *et al.*, *Black Consumer Profiles* (Ann Arbor, 1980).

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nation-state analogy would lead to a call for national independence or some minimal form of self-determination, the corporate intervention strategy reverts to schizophrenia. When discussing the problem, it argues that blacks require broad-based group development. Yet, when it negotiates it does so on the basis of a commitment to individualized integration into the American economic mainstream. It thus mobilizes the problems of the group as the basis for all claims while it reverts to particularistic demands. The value of the nation-state analogy lies in its ability to provide analytical unity as a basis for making demands, although the scenario that the analogy implies is rejected.

At another level, the corporate intervention strategy resorts to received theory. The analytical model that serves to organize conceptually the black community is provided by the Kerner Commission Report.[13] In that analytical schema, the more fundamental concepts of oppression and exploitation, both of which suggest more intractable problems, and both of which are more suited for the colonial model, are replaced. Instead, proponents affirm that the basic problems confronting blacks can be defined in terms of inequality, racism, discrimination, segregation and prejudice. They argue that racial polarization will result if those problems are left unchecked. From an analytical standpoint, these are more passive, symbolically ladened concepts that leave in their wake the images of constitutional protest, non-violent direct action, civil rather than human rights, and reformism. To the extent that an establishment body feels unconstrained in employing the concepts in question, it is only because the phenomena they help to organize do not in those forces represent a threat to the prevailing order.

Proponents of the corporate intervention strategy tend to disassociate themselves from the tendency to blame the victim, which is a major feature of the Kerner Report. Nevertheless, both Kerner and the corporate intervenors agree on the need to muster the energies of white America to take ameliorative steps in the interest of her black citizens. This is an important analytical unity because it externalizes the agents: blacks continue to remain objects rather than subjects of developmental activities. The received perspective is also flawed to the extent to which it implies that the problems of blacks are aberrant and episodic rather than systemic. The Kerner Report, then, "failed to put white racism in a systems context so that we can see who benefits directly and materially from American racism."[14] This limitation is embodied in the character of the recommendations made by Kerner and it serves as a critical boundary for the demands that are possible under the corporate intervention strategy. Implicitly, then, the Kerner Commission Report becomes a convenient dock from which to launch the liberation armada.

13. The National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders, *Report of the National Advisory Commission on Civil Disorders* (New York, 1968).

14. Mack H. Jones, "The Kerner Report: Errors and Omissions," *Kerner Report Revisited: University of Illinois Bulletin*, June 1970, pp. 155-156.

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Developmental Demands?

The basic demands seem harmless enough on their face. Emphasis must be placed on a "civil economics" movement. "This becomes necessary because of the festering economic problems which our communities face and because the largest of the corporations which make the major decisions affecting this economy have not been civilized enough to guarantee an expanding quality of life for the millions."[15] Proponents thus insist that they sit together with corporate America and negotiate an agreement aimed specifically at redressing long-standing suffering. They call for economic reciprocity in the fullest sense, a fair share. In line with the nation-state analogy, proponents insist that mutual trade and beneficial relations will accrue from an effort to develop common market relations.[16] Reciprocity, however, cannot be attained if matters are left to chance. Reciprocity can only be achieved through planning. Therefore, decided intervention is necessary. Thus a call is made for the various parties to come together to negotiate the terms of the future relation. Proponents note that they merely seek justice and protection and ask only that they be allowed to "affirm what we are."[17] No attempt is made to specify what the latter statement means in any real terms but the content of the demands is instructive.

A major part of the strategy centers around a new set of affirmative action demands. It is an effort to transpose the demand for quotas from the governmental sphere to the private sector. Corporations are called on to provide set-aside business for legal firms, banks insurance companies, advertising agencies and related "minority vendors." This is the centerpiece of the demands. Another dimension concerns securing designated franchises from major corporations, the rationale being that heretofore the corporations have been remiss in their outreach efforts. They are also called on to elect blacks to their corporate boards. In all cases the demands are intended to address the interests of established business and professional groups — many of whom became established on the basis of those earlier governmental efforts.

A corporatist ethic pervades this strategy because the effort is to become an integral cog in the machinery of corporate America. The corporate intervention strategy intends for the relation to extend far beyond the rather routine relation that obtains between the parent firm and its franchises. It seeks sponsorship, quotas, guarantees. Its aim is to become a part of the ongoing corporate logic, albeit in a subordinate manner. The failure of the strategy lies in the fact that there is no effort to capture a particular sector of activity or to develop towards a productive base for extended reproduction. Indeed, a peculiar characteristic of the businesses being promoted is their nearly universal unproductive character. The goal is to accommodate with existing business practices no matter how counterproductive or unenlightened they

15. Jesse L. Jackson, "Confronting Monopoly and Keeping the Movement Moving," in Ernest Kaiser, ed., *A Freedomways Reader: Afro-America in the Seventies* (New York, 1976), p. 355.
16. Jesse Jackson, interview, *op.cit.*
17. *Ibid.*

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may be. The impetus for corporations to accept this arrangement comes from the fact that proponents claim to embody the interests of an identifiable consumer power base. Moreover, it is argued, the covenants being offered are morally and economically sound. Thus corporations can gain competent services from the entities they sponsor and they can win points with the black community. The NAACP has instituted a "Fair Share Honor Roll," complete with a five-point checklist, as a means of lauding those corporations that participate.

While the list of demands is fairly consistent as between the civil rights groups involved and their corporate targets, the call for jobs that go to rank and file members of the black community is also fairly consistently at the bottom of the list. Normally such covenants can be consummated without any real agreement on employment-related matters so long as the business end is solidified. The one exception is the Burger King covenant, which seems to focus on jobs for black youth to a greater extent than the others do. It is also true that in a relative sense, the corporations that have been targeted so far have fairly progressive hiring practices anyway.

Since corporations cannot be expected to engage in extensive good works or to voluntarily assist the black community in its development progress, this strategy must be seen as the narrowly based program that it is. It represents an abandonment of the broad-based concerns raised in the era of the state intervention strategy. It is an elite program. In large part the businesses that are being promoted — and it is businesses that are being promoted rather than the black community as an entity — already enjoy some measure of success. Additionally, it is difficult to imagine how those specific businesses will ever generate more than a token number of jobs — and even then they will most likely go to college-trained individuals. There is no hint that productive economic development is the aim of this strategy since the businesses being promoted normally do not stimulate the forward and backward linkages that one would seek to develop in a clearheaded developmental schema. Even if we accept that it is an Africanized version of "trickle down" economics, it is still rather difficult to see exactly what will be available to trickle down, and then to whom?

The Selective Bluff

Where then does the larger community come into play in this new development strategy? In order to answer that question, we must return full circle to the myth of the mobilizable consumer market. Although the mobilizability of the consumer market has already been shown to be a questionable assumption, the threat of a massive selective boycott remains the basis for all bargaining. "We have developed the double-edged techniques," says Jackson, "of organized mass consumer boycotts and negotiations directed at affecting the policy of major corporations."[18] The myth of mobilizability notwithstanding, it is still the case that corporate America has not seen fit to respond favorably

18. Jesse Jackson, "Confronting Monopoly," *op.cit.*, p. 355.

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to the demands of the corporate intervention strategy. Until now black consumer power has been held up as a living, breathing reality and the boycott has been held out as a genuine threat. In the face of an intransigent corporate sector it is put into force.

The critical weapon in the strategy is the boycott. Much has been made of the fact that strategists have resurrected this traditional tool. A tenable question, though, is whether it has been resurrected or transmuted? Recall, the early civil rights boycotts were mass-based, direct engagements with political and economic institutions and agencies. The decision to take the institutions of the old South as the focal point meant that the boycott was decidedly political. Where economic institutions were concerned, the demand was for jobs.

The new corporate boycott is more restrained and less directly political. Its self-concept is more a case of "selective withdrawal of enthusiasm" rather than hot-blooded encounters. It is much more of a mass media phenomenon, a spectacle of sorts. Strategists obtain unpaid advertising in the form of news coverage and press releases. It is absolutely necessary to gain maximum media exposure and to deliver up pithy nuggets to provide cues to the viewing and listening audiences. While the strategy is skillful in maximizing every opening to communicate, it faces a lop-sided battle against the billions spent by corporate America on advertising and public relations. Thus, most of the agreements end up as flash and flourish with little or predictable substantive follow-up, or they fizzle out in contests of will played against unyielding corporations.[19]

In this strategy the "boycotting" black community is seldom seen. Indeed, its silence is revered because then it is possible to impute meaning and define unity. The real strength of the threatened boycott lies in the corporation's fear of unfavorable media coverage since none of the boycotts seems able to significantly impact the markets of the target companies.[20] Indeed, the question of targets raises another question altogether.

While strategists acknowledge the advanced character of the American economy and have gone so far as to produce a magazine intended to promote such thinking,[21] the initial targets have been highly visible beverage corporations, fast-food chains, and entertainment companies. This is hardly the foundation of a true development strategy for black Americans because in one case they lose themselves in drink and unhealthy gluttony, and in the other they take to flights of fantasy. Any inroads made into these corporations would seem to be of marginal utility in a serious-minded development program.

The real significance of the transmuted boycott is not to be found in its ability to mobilize mass retaliation or open, direct confrontation, but in its

19. See, for instance, Thomas Oliver, "The PUSH-COKE Pact: 1 Year Later," *The Atlanta Constitution,* August 15, 1982; Irwin Ross, "PUSH Collides with Busch," *op.cit.*

20. Both Coca-Cola and Busch maintain that their markets were not affected at all by the PUSH boycotts.

21. *Techknowledge Magazine* (Chicago). The editor has also forcefully stated the case in the *Blackbook International Reference Guide (1983),* p. 3.

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ability to pull off the bluff. The black masses function as passive objects in this strategy. With the possible exception of contentious college students and sectors of the business and administrative strata, the corporate intervention strategy does not have a solid constituency. That is not an insurmountable problem because, as was mentioned, the key variable is not the people but the media. The media can help create the mobilizable mass.

Actually, the concern in the corporate intervention strategy is not to wield power over the black American consumer market directly, although that would be a desirable option. Rather, proponents are more disposed to gathering corporate patrons for businesses that seek to transcend the "minority" market. The discussion of the consumer market, the effort to breathe life into it and to give it an aura of power, is only a means to an end. It is intended to provide a justification and a basis for subsequent business relations. In that sense this strategy is one step removed from the once popular "buy black" phase of business development because the aim is to boost businesses that seek to transform themselves into clients of corporate America — not as minority businessmen, but as businessmen. The limited, though necessary, sense of group destiny and group development that was to be found in earlier strategies gives way to what are largely narrow, class-interested demands.

Conclusion

Given the above, how does the corporate intervention strategy address the most dire dimensions of black reality (unemployment, impoverishment, dispossession)? The answer: not at all. This is not a program for the reconstruction of the most downtrodden sectors of the black community. Nor, indeed, is it a vehicle for self-determination and economic development, although it appropriates the group's history, stirs the group's passions, and seeks to mobilize the group's membership. Rather, this is very much a program that draws no scenarios and makes no promises as to how its implementation will result in development for the community as a whole. Indeed, those questions are deliberately left unanswered because, then, only those with light can seek through the fog. Beyond that, it is a dangerous strategy precisely because of the symbolism that it mobilizes and transmutes and also because of the assumptions that it makes and popularizes — most of which are flawed — about the focus, goals, needs and character of black economic development.

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THE AMBIGUITY OF ROMANIAN NATIONAL COMMUNISM

by Vladimir Tismaneanu

For a better understanding of the present situation in Romania it is necessary to go beyond the limited political approach, i.e., to seek the germs of contemporary conflicts in the history of that country — especially in the history of the Romanian Communist Party. We have to think about the origins of Romanian communism in 1921, when the Socialist Left split into a strong and active radical minority and a "reformist" traditional Social-Democratic wing. The situation of the Left in Romania was further complicated by an *ethnic syncretism*. Because of the incorporation of Transylvania, Bessarabia, and North Bukovina and the subsequent national, social, economic, and cultural claims of the Hungarian, German, Jewish, Ukrainian, and Russian minorities, the ethnic problem became an obsession during the inter-war period. The need to deal with the national question and the problems of underdevelopment affected the Romanian Left — a marginal entity in an overwhelmingly peasant society. Until the 1920's, political power had been shared by the two political parties formed during the second half of the 19th century (Liberal and Conservative), and whose two-party system survived until the Communist revolution. The main challenge for the Left was to project a coherent social, economic and political future for the country as a mobilizing alternative to the national oligarchy's programmes.

The historical modifications which occurred between 1917 and 1921 provided the Left with an opportunity to propose solutions for the social tensions in the recently integrated regions and to apply the theses of historical materialism. The Romanian Left benefited by an impressive theoretical heritage whose synthesis culminated in Constantin Dobrogeanu-Gherea's democratic socialism, which was violently rejected by communist doctrinaires. The Communist Party sought to undermine the "gradual-reformist" outlook in order to emphasize its own *universal mission*. The hypostatized historical totality provided a perfect ideological alibi for the Comintern's hegemonism to fulfill its monopolistic purposes. From the very beginning, the delusive vocabulary, the Comintern demagogy, and sectarian leftist radicalism have been the trademark of Romanian communists — even before the foundation of the Romanian Communist Party in May 1921. In Romania, unlike in other countries, the Left wing did not become a *national* representative. Its composition, a decisive political characteristic in a country like Romania, was overrepresented by the ethnic minorities (Hungarians, Jews, Germans, Bulgarians, Russians, Ukrainians). This delayed for a long period of time interaction with national social forces. Moreover, as in the case of the Polish Communist Party,[1] the Comintern closely monitored the Romanian CP; it continually

1. Cf. Issac Deutscher, *Marxism in our Time*. Edited by Tamara Deutscher (Berkeley, 1971).

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interfered with its activities by supporting the most extremist trends and by encouraging a self-destructive sectarianism.

This was tolerated because of the strong influence of the Russian and Hungarian revolutions, especially in the recently integrated regions of the historical homeland where Bolshevik ideas washed with local radical traditions and were facilitated by the moderate Social-Democratic leaders' inability to develop a viable political project because of their complacency and lack of imagination. In addition, the Bolshevik Party's famous "encirclement complex" required devotion *perinde ac cadaver* toward the "homeland of socialism" as the supreme mission of the Communist Parties in countries within the "cordon sanitaire." This situation engendered a peculiar sectarian utopianism within the polically marginal community of Romanian communists. Nowhere more than in Romania was the communist Left imbued with the myth of the fidelity toward the Soviet Union as the "touchstone of proletarian internationalism." Nowhere else did belonging to the communist movement involve such an excruciating sacrifice of basic national values. Such a predicament was also the outcome of the Romanian radical Left's increasing isolation: the result of a hypertrophied political *orgueil* resulting from fictitious identification with the "sense of history." As the communist Left became increasingly marginal during the inter-war period, its conditions also became more sectarian, its language more aggressive, and its dogma more intolerant.

The May 1921 split in the Romanian Socialist Party, the 1924 Government's decision to outlaw the Romanian CP, and the hardening of the Comintern's political line as a consequence of internal struggles within the Bolshevik Party, resulted in a specific strategic and tactical outlook in Romanian communists. That group's main political characteristics were historical subjectivism, revolutionary devotion, doctrinaire schematism, lack of strategic realism, adventurism, and unconditional solidarity with the Soviet Union. Moreover, the Comintern's training system was meant to guarantee the perpetual indoctrination of the cadres, the elimination of all independent thought, and the standardization of beliefs.

In this respect, the first generation of leaders in the Romanian Communist Party (RCP), in spite of their devotion to the Soviet cause, were not considered perfectly fit for Comintern designs: they had not been completely submitted to the dictates of Stalinist manipulators. They were mainly a group of intellectuals familiar with classical Marxist literature and fascinated by the Leninist paradigm. Those people could easily accept the pre-eminence of the Soviet Party within the Comintern but were also convinced that practical decisions and national initiatives should remains the prerogative of the various sections of the International. For them, the "Bolshevization" of Communist Parties meant something other than a *permanent purge*. That generation was composed of people such as: Alexander Dobrogeanu-Gherea, Elek Köblös, Eugen Rozvany, David Fabian, Marcel Pauker, Ecaterina Arbore, Elena Filipovici, Timotei Marin, and Imre Aladar. They were all founding members of the RCP who were forced to emigrate to Moscow during the 1930's and

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eventually vanished in the Gulag with so many other communist refugees from other countries.[2]

The massacre of that political elite during the Great Purge made possible the transformation of the RCP from a Leninist party into a Stalinist one. Those were people for whom the Leninist epoch was an ineliminable part of their political past. Thus, they were embarrassing witnesses to the various stages in the construction of the Stalin myth. Their memory was dangerous in that it presented a challenge to the new leading group of the International. Their tragic fate exemplifies the Stalinist project of cutting off continuity in the political activity of the International, of neutralizing any attempt of critical thinking, of suppressing the smallest nucleus of potential resistance in the Bolshevized-Stalinized parties.[3]

After an intense factional struggle (administratively suppressed through a Resolution of the Comintern), the 5th Congress of the RCP (Moscow, 1931) adopted the Stalinist strategy of "class against class" politics which had already resulted in the collapse of the German Left and in the Nazi take-over. After the 7th Congress of the International, a new team was promoted with Boris Stefanov as the General Secretary of the Party to displace the former RCP leadership led by Stefansky-Gorn (a Polish CP militant executed during the Great Purge). Unfortunately, the Comintern and RCP archives are not open to study. There is, however, an illuminating source of information in the memory of some survivors: those people who had remained in Romania or were fighting in the International Brigades during the Spanish Civil War and consequently escaped Stalinist terror. They were able to tell the truth after 1956, when the dictatorship was somewhat "softened." But even then they were deprived of a real audience. Their voices were heard only in the dangerous space of a forbidden, surreptitious dialogue. Obviously, their memories are intensely subjective, yet they remain unique historical sources within a system where memory is systematically purified and history undergoes periodical readjustments.

Stefanov's mission was to prepare the Party for the great strategic shifts of the Soviet Union on the eve of WW II, to assure the total support of Romanian communists for any *volte-face* in the International. At the same time, within the country, the apparatus was in the hands of a Secretariat led by Stefan Foris. But a third wing was emerging: the *organization in prisons*.[4] Within the latter group, a

2. There are few studies of the psychological profile of these communist militants, and even fewer sociological analyses focusing on the extermination of a whole revolutionary generation. The situation is somewhat better in literature where Manès Sperber, Arthur Koestler, Ignazio Silone, and more recently Jorge Semprun, Danilo Kiš, and George Konrad, have done so much to save that memory and to understand the moral dilemmas of that defeated generation, obsessed by the logic of history and devoured by the cold rationality of bureaucratic terror.

3. Unfortunately, in his monumental and generally well documented history of Stalinism, Roy A. Medvedev did not consider it necessary to insist more on this irreducible dimension of Stalinist totalitarianism, all the more so, as he succeeded in interviewing many survivors of the Soviet concentration camps. Cf. Roy A. Medvedev, *Let History Judge: The Origins and the Consequences of Stalinism*. Ed. by David Joravsky and Georges Haupt (New York, 1971) and Robert Conquest, *The Great Terror: Stalin's Purge of the Thirties* (New York, 1968).

4. For an accurate introduction to Romanian communism, as well as an analysis of the power

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decisive role was played by the Party organization in the Doftana prison under the leadership of Gheorghiu-Dej who, after the war, became the RCP General Secretary.

After Stefanov's ouster in 1940, Ana Pauker (Marcel Pauker's widow) was chosen by Moscow to lead the Romanian political emigration in the Soviet Union. Her husband, better known under the name of Luximin, had been assassinated as a Bukharinite during the Great Purge (probably in 1938). Ana Pauker's political biography is remarkable to the extent that, in the generally occluded history of the RCP, her name appears in several key-situations, culminating with her breakdown (1952), as a victim of the same hysterical repressive wave which engendered the Slansky show-trial in Czechoslovakia. After the 5th congress of the RCP, Ana Pauker had been active in the Party's Foreign Politburo (Prague and Vienna) and in the Comintern's Balkan Bureau, together with Dimitrov and Kolarov. After 1933, she became an instructor for the International, working in France with the famous "comrade Clément" (actually the Czech militant E. Fried) for the consolidation of Maurice Thorez's leadership within the French CP. At that time, she was already the most important Comintern agent among Romanian communists: her personality was emblematic for the whole generation of Stalinists *purs et durs*. Her trial in Craiova (1936) was instrumentalized by the Romanian and international Left to turn her into one of those *figures de proue* of Stalinist propaganda, such as Ibarruri, Rakosi, Dimitrov, or Thälmann. Ana Pauker was therefore the only personality of Romanian communism accepted, and even demanded, by Moscow for an exchange with the Romanian Government, after the annexation of Bessarabia and North Bukovina (June 1940) — a political step of the same type as the most recent Bukovski-Corvalan exchange. Once in Moscow, along with other refugees of the "second generation," Ana Pauker organized the "Moscow leading Center," functioning in tandem with the Bucharest Central Committee (led by the Foris-Kofler group) and the "Center of the prisons."

The "Center of the prisons" was organized by Gheorghiu-Dej, and was composed by a group of militants who played significant roles after the Antifascist Insurrection (August 23, 1944): Iosif Chisinevschi, Chivu Stoica, Theohari Georgescu, Alexandru Moghioros, Alexandru Draghici, Nicolae Ceausescu, etc.[5] The main feature of communist activity during WW II was, in

struggle within the Party before Ceausescu's period, see Ghita Ionescu, *Communism in Romania, 1944-1962* (New York, 1964). For a comparative approach, see Kenneth Jowitt, *Revolutionary Breakthroughs and National Development: The Case of Romania, 1944-1965* (Berkeley, 1971). Cf. also, Richard F. Staar, *Communist Regimes in Eastern Europe* (4th ed.; Stanford, 1982), pp. 191-227; Robert R. King, *A History of the Romanian Communist Party* (Stanford, 1980); Robert R. King, "Romania," in Teresa Rakowska-Harmstone and Andrew György (eds.), *Communism in Eastern Europe* (Bloomington, Ind., 1979), pp. 145-167; Stephen Fischer-Galati, *The New Rumania: From People's Democracy to Socialist Republic* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967); Myron Rush, *How Communist States Change Their Rulers* (Ithaca and London, 1974).

5. For more details concerning the significance of the internecine struggles within the RCP, see François Fejtö, *Histoire des démocraties popularies* (Paris, 1952), translated in English as *A History of the People's Democracies: Eastern Europe since Stalin* (New York, 1971).

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spite of the war, the ferocious competition between the two centers, both under Moscow's control, and, after 1943, the dissolution of the Comintern. Throughout the war, the subordination did not diminish, and the favoring of a group over the other was a function of Moscow's interests. Thus, the hegemonic Comintern apparatus manipulated internal RCP conflicts and brought about a *new leading nucleus* of national elements. After the war, the Moscow Center and the new hegemonic group were forced to merge under the leadership of Ana Pauker and Gheorghiu-Dej. In this Machiavellian game, the losers were Stefan Foris (assassinated by the communist political police in 1946), devoted to Moscow but unable to understand Soviet *Realpolitik* in Eastern Europe, and, a few years later, Lucretiu Patrascanu, an "independent" communist leader, equally abhorred by Dej and Pauker. An outstanding intellectual, Patrascanu was the first Romanian communist Minister. However, he was accused by Dej of "nationalist deviation" (1946), a pretext to expel him from the Politburo and to prepare the Party for future purges.[6]

The return of the Moscow Center leaders (September 1944) permitted the constitution of a hegemonic group entirely devoted to Soviet interests, contributed to the strengthening of the "revolutionary prestige" of the Center of the prisons and marked the beginning of a "duality of power" in the RCP. In other words, the successive repressive campaigns launched by Dej proved that the Interior Center had never accepted to share power with the "emigrants." This should not be seen as a permanent, albeit for nearly two decades repressed, nostalgia for national autonomy, but rather as the will for an *absolute, undisputed, and integral power*. Thus, the "autonomous" Romanian line (after 1963-64), should be seen as the outcome of a *dictatorial ambition of political conservation* rather than as a liberal tendency *in nuce*, determined by an imaginary humanist and generously patriotic proclivity of the regime. In this context, one should not forget that the Romanian communists were among the most reticent in the denunciation of Stalinism, that, unlike Tito's Yugoslavia, Romania did not resist Stalinist hegemonism after WW II, but only in 1962-1964 under Khrushchev during the moderate anti-Stalinist campaign in the Soviet Union and in other East European countries.

The gates of labor camps and political prisons in Romania were not fully opened in 1956-1957, as a consequence of the 20th Congress, nor in 1961-1962 during the second wave of de-Stalinization, but only in 1964, at the height of the Romanian-Soviet dispute, as a demagogic symbol of the sham democratization of the system. No one dared to mention the fate of political detainees at the faked "liberal" Plenum of the C.C. in December 1961. No one dared to disturb the anniversary ceremonies in August 1964 to recall the names of tens of thousands of victims of the Stalinist abuses: former members of the "historical parties" (National-Liberal and National-Peasant), former members of the Social-Democratic Party who resisted the forced unification

6. Patrascanu was eventually rehabilitated by Ceausescu in April 1968 at a famous Plenum of the Central Committee, conceived as the Romanian counterpart to the liberalization movement in Czechoslovakia, but actually a skillful manoeuvre meant to forestall any possible renovated trend within the Party and/or among intelligentsia.

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with the Communist Party in February 1948, intellectuals who opposed the violation of national culture and even of the Romanian language through Russianization, students who expressed their solidarity with Hungary and Poland in 1956, peasants who refused to join collective farms and were automatically treated as 'kulaks," industrial workers who denounced Stakhanovist experiments imported from the Soviet Union, etc.

Also symptomatic of Romanian cultural life between 1961 and 1965, and of the resistance of petrified Stalinist dogma against any attempt at liberalization, is the fact that not a single literary magazine was permitted to publish a Romanian translation of Solzhenitsyn' *Ivan Denissovich*. Similarly, the Party leadership succeeded in avoiding a national crisis resulting from the public denunciation of Stalinist crimes, thus neutralizing the intellectual revolt which shattered other communist countries. It is not an accident that the Romanian apparatchiks have never hidden their affinities with the "hard" Stalinist heritage and that Romanian leaders have been sympathetic towards Enver Hoxha's Albania or Kim II Sung's North Korea. More than mere tactical interests were behind the solidarity between Romanian neo-Stalinists and Chinese leaders before and during the Cultural Revolution: their *Wahlverwandschaften* were warranted by common political values and by the fact that both Parties refused to investigate the roots of Stalinism. Both shared the magic-ritualist conception of the omnipotent and omniscient Supreme Leader, and both practiced periodic anti-intellectual purges inspired by the same rudimentary Stalinist dogma.

From the early debates within the RCP after Khrushchev's "Secret Report" at the 20th Congress, it was obvious that the line encouraged and eventually imposed by the leading group converged with dogmatic-conservative positions within the Soviet Party (the Molotov-Malenkov group) and that the RCP was prepared to do anything to hinder a potential anti-Stalinist campaign in Romania. Headed by Gheorghiu-Dej, the leadership was indebted to Stalin and Malenkov for the support received during the May-June 1952 purge of the Pauker-Luca-Georgescu group for "right-wing" deviation — an accusation strangely combined at that time with the exact opposite "sin" of "leftist opportunism."

The Romanian leader's complacency was shaken by the revelations of the 20th Congress of the CPSU. The Romanian delegation returned from Moscow outraged: the idol had been overturned, the system was threatened with disintegration and the sacred myths of communism had been profaned by Khrushchev. The RCP reaction toward de-Stalinization was among the most reticent, when not directly critical and hostile. Here one finds the main source of subsequent Romanian-Soviet conflict. It indicates the stubborn refusal of Romanian communists to comply with Khrushchev's anti-Stalinist politics. For Romanian Stalinists, Khrushchev's line could not lead to anything positive, would only generate anarchy within the world communist movement, and amounted to revisionism and "bourgeois liberalism." Very likely, Romanian leaders were relieved during the insurrection and then the repression in

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Hungary. The catastrophe in the neighbor country was shrewdly turned into a negative demonstration of the Romanian correct approach to de-Stalinization. The tragedy in Hungary was seen as confirming Romanian apprehensions: the RCP's reiterated conviction that Stalin's theses on the dictatorship of the proletariat were not obsolete, but required only slight modifications such as those introduced by Mao Tse-tung in his doctrine of contradictions and in the articles published in 1956 by *Renmin Ribao* concerning the "historical experience of the dictatorship of the proletariat."

The Romanian leaders supported the crushing of the Hungarian insurrection, the hardening of the Soviet line and there are reasons to believe that the Dej group gambled on the triumph of the Molotov-Malenkov faction in the Kremlin struggle for power. The defeat of the Hungarian revolution, the lowering of the liberal temperature in Poland, the new offensive of the most conservative circles in Moscow, combined with the intensification of Chinese international activities, facilitated the task of Romanian Stalinists. A new period of repression began at the end of 1956 mainly against intellectuals and students. The Writers' Union was blamed for lack of ideological vigilence and many communist writers suffered Party penalties for sharing "revisionist" positions. In universities, purge-meetings were organized as in Stalin's days, and mass arrests among students culminated with the 1957-1960 trials.[7] The fact that the members of Imre Nagy's legal Hungarian Government, who had officially been granted political asylum in Romania, were interrogated in that country and eventually extradited to Hungary where they had to confront the "justice" of the Kadar regime, with its preposterous accusations and sentences, was more than a mere historical accident.

1957 was the last phase in Dej's struggle for absolute power within the Party. Convinced that the Molotov-Malenkov group would win against Khrushchev, in June, Dej decided to eliminate, at the same time, his former comrade and accomplice, Iosif Chisinevschi, and his personal rival, Miron Constantinescu — one of the few intellectuals in the Party's top hierarchy, suspected of "liberalism" or of supporting a less intolerant line closer to the spirit of the 20th Congress.

Two far-reaching events took place in 1958, the departure of Soviet troops stationed in Romania and the launching of a new campaign of purges against mid-level Party members. The first event was meant to prove the stability of the Romanian regime and indicated the climax of friendly relations between Romanian and Soviet leaders, as well as total Soviet confidence in Romania. The Soviet withdrawal of troops from Romania came as the confirmation of Romanian discipline, the reward for an exemplary solidarity and at the same time as a propagandistic demonstration of the truth of Soviet promises of independence for satellite countries. The other event, the new purge, engen-

7. Among the convicted, there was: Paul Goma, Leonid Dimov, Alexandru Ivansius, et. al. — writers who became influential during the short "liberal" intermezzo under Ceausescu. Paul Goma, the mouthpiece of Romanian dissidence during the 70's, was arrested by Ceausescu's political police and finally banished to France where he published several novels describing the Romanian Gulag.

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dered a climate of terror within the Party. Thousands of Party members were blamed, but the hardest hit were those who joined the RCP during the clandestine years, the people who dared question certain basic assumptions and, for that very reason, were suspected of political heresy. The main causes of the new purge were the Stalinist group's reluctance to undertake an open democratic analysis of the historical experience of Romanian communism, the rejection of any attempt to establish a new political and economic line in accordance with national traditions unburdened by unbearable dogma. Actually, behind official exultation, it was not difficult to identify the Romanian intelligentsia's growing malaise, the working class' distress, and the despair of peasants forced to abandon their properties and to enter collective farms. The Party's Stalinist strategy became every harder after 1958. Collectivization and industrialization intensified, resulting in increasing discontent of the closely controlled masses.

The Romanian-Soviet conflict should then be examined within the confrontation within the *same socio-economic and political system*. This thesis is supported by the various Romanian statements during the crisis in relations with the Soviet Union and, above all, in the April 1964 RCP Declaration: "the values we share, the common objective, the common essence of our social formation, are more important than any temporary divergences." The country's national interests, the Romanian people's patriotic aspirations, their enmity against Soviet imperialism, as well as their traditional attachment to Western cultural values, were instrumentalized by the Stalinist regime to win, at a difficult historical juncture, mass support and the intellectuals' political participation. Epitomizing the structural ambiguity of Romanian "national communism," 1968 meant both the climax of the *simulated* process of democratization (the attempt at an economic reform after the RCP National Conference on December 1967, the rehabilitation of *communist* victims of Stalinist terror, Ceausescu's open solidarity with Czechoslovakia) and the inauguration of a new period of repression and authoritarian control.

Unending repressive waves within the Party, generalized suspicion, and refinements in totalitarian techniques, succeeded in suppressing, or at least in neutralizing, independent thought, broke relations with the movement's past, and destroyed continuity with the Romanian Left's traditions. What Kolakowski showed concerning the fate of Marxism in Eastern Europe, what Zinoviev established with regard to the degeneration of historical materialism in the Soviet Union, is also true for Romania.[8] Marxism has been emptied of all critical content: it has become a *functionalist-pragmatic* ideology, the very opposite of its initial emancipatory thrust. Under the names of Marxism — or of dialectical materialism — Soviet-type systems use a stifling doctrinaire

8. Cf. Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism*, vol. III, *The Breakdown*, (Oxford, 1978); and Alexandre Zinoviev, *Nous et l'Occident* (Lausanne, 1981), especially the essay "Staline et le stalinisme." See also Wolfgang Leonhard, *Three Faces of Marxism* (New York, 1979); Gustav A. Wetter, *Soviet Ideology Today* (New York, 1966); Svetozar Stojanovic, *Between Ideals and Reality — A Critique of Socialism and its Future* (New York, 1973); Mihajlo Markovic, "The Concept of Revolution," in *Praxis*, 1969, Nos. 1-2; "Personal Integrity in Socialist Society," in *Praxis*, 1966, No. 4.

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ersatz — a presumed mobilizing ideology meant to cover lack of principles, historical imagination, as well as a cynical outlook impregnated with resentment and impervious to the genuine social imperative. It is useless to recapitulate the ideological twists of the Romanian regime, its erratic jumps from "self-managed communism" to fake Titoist inspiration, to the fatuous imitation of the Chinese Cultural Revolution (Ceausescu's "Political-Cultural Theses" and the November 1971 ideological Plenum), from a messianic vision of the Third World to the "new-right" — inspired opening toward the archaic myths of a nebulous "Thracian-Dacian" imperial past and enduring "völkisch-heroisch" cultural-political legacy. Under the jingoist-demagogic rhetoric, one can recognize a desperate effort to control and manipulate the masses. And all this cynical political game, all this exploitation of collective irrational impulses, has been undertaken under the cloak of a hypothetical national autonomy, of the presumed "absolute sovereignty" — the eternal alibi for so many betrayed promises and frustrated hopes.

The political-spiritual constant in Romanian communism consists of an uncompromising intolerance, inflexibility, rigidity, and sectarianism, in the absence of any critical self-consciousness and particularly in the jealous preservation of the Stalinist tradition. The successive purges seem to be the inescapable law of evolution of this political-social movement — what allowed Romanian communism to overcome so many difficult moments which have resulted elsewhere in significant historical changes. Also significant are the social, economic, and cultural state of the nation, the climate of terror and fear which has been maintained and strengthened by the regime's repressive apparatus, the disheartening outcome of the brutal eradication of the slightest attempt at resistance. The history of Romanian "national communism" has been the history of the strict application of Stalinism, a traumatizing experience which has generated an extremely *conservative socio-political structure* lacking the necessary self-regulating elements and mixed in ruinous economic practices.[9] The myth of heavy industry as the privileged solution for modernization, the fascination with collectivized agriculture, (implemented in spite of its obvious failure in specific Romanian conditions), the obsession with the cultural revolution aiming at creating a new type of human being, have had stupefying effects tragically demonstrated by Romania's present crisis. The *lack of political legitimacy,* the original sin of Romanian communism, was compensated, even during the inter-war period, by an exclusive narcissism rationalized in the belief that this prophetic minority had been predestined to reshape Romania.

9. The Romanian corporatist tradition, characterized mainly by Mihail Manoilescu's works, as well as certain economic-political contemporary processes, seem to justify the corporatist hypothesis. See Daniel Chirot, "The Corporatist Model of Socialism: Notes on Romanian Development," in *Theory and Society*, 1980, n. 9., pp. 363-81; Kenneth Jowitt, *The Leninist Response to the National Dependency* (Berkeley, 1978). For an interesting description of bureaucratic mechanisms within Romania ("socialist bureaucracy at its lowest level: the rural elite cadres in Romanian villages"), see Steven L. Sampson, "Local-Level 'Bureaucrats' in Romania" (Paper prepared for the First International Conference on the Comparative, Historical and Critical Analysis of Bureaucracy. Zürich, October, 1982).

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The theoretical foundations of such a revolutionary-redemptive program, its strategic framework, its economic gestures and its rational social alternatives, were impersonal copies of the Stalinist mythology — which was consistently worshipped and treated as truth revealed *sub specie aeternitatis*. In the case of Romanian communism, traditional Stalinist anti-intellectualism was intensified by a visceral contempt for theory, by a fateful ignorance over many decades of national intellectual traditions, as well as of critical directions within Marxist theory. The only noteworthy exception was Patrascanu, an intellectual with a solid theoretical background, author of several studies in social history and philosophical criticism.[10] Although average in terms of Romanian inter-war intellectual life, these works are real theoretical *chef d'oeuvre* when compared with the political literature produced by communist ideologists.[11]

As already noticed, during the two decades of his absolute control over the RCP, Georghiu-Dej's political biography is marked by striking victories over real or imaginary enemies. Dej belonged to the "charismatic" generation of communist leaders. His contradictory personality reproduced all those features peculiar to Stalinist militants such as Rakosi, Gottwald, Bierut, Tchervenkov, Ibarruri, or Thorez: the ability to manipulate the appartus, a dogmatic but at the same time cynical-instrumental outlook, an undeniable ability to exploit proletarian mythology, and a sincere commitment to Stalinist practices. Nicolae Ceausescu's career evolved within the same moral and ideological framework. Along with the position of RCP General Secretary, he has been given a power monopoly which he managed to guard and develop. He has had the ability to use conflicts of interests and vanity among the "barons" of Dej's Politburo, to promote his own image as the guarantor of the leading role of the Communist Party, i.e., as a factor of political stability in an epoch of rapid and dramatic political changes in other East European countries. While other "socialist" societies (Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, and to a certain extent even the GDR under Honecker) were trying to implement some structural economic reforms by acknowledging the function of market-mechanisms and accepting some economic de-centralization, Ceausescu postulated the leading role of the Party as a *sine qua non* condition of national political and economic survival of "socialist democracy."

10. Patrascanu's works have been republished in Romanian after his official rehabilitation. One of his main historical contributions is available in French: see Lucretiu D. Patrascanu, *Sous trois dictatures* (Paris, 1946). This is a text he wrote during World War II.

11. Patrascanu's tragic fate was partly determined by his unusual status within the Romanian communist movement, the result of his doctrinaire posture in the context of post-1944 power struggles. His political and eventual physical liquidation was convenient for both rival factions: the former Center of the prisons, led by Dej, and the "emigrants," headed by Ana Pauker and Vasile Luca. Patrascanu's annihilation compensated for so many frustrations of Romanian communism and for its unacknowledged inferiority complex. Lacking national roots, the RCP's leadership decided to exterminate a potential national leader. The Patrascanu Trial (1954), beyond its repressive substance, beyond the anecdotic-historical contingencies and its hallucinating imbroglio, was meant to assure a moment of *political exorcism*, it was the *épreuve de force* of the leading Stalinist leadership. Cf. Annie Kriegel, *Les grands procès dans les systèmes communistes; la pédagogie infernale* (Paris, 1972). This is one of the best analyses of the diabolical logic of the show-trials.

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National megalomania became increasingly mixed with a despotical leading style, a growing voluntarism in economic decisions, and the persistent rejection of any pluralist alternatives. Nothing can irritate and terrify the Romanian Nomenklatura more than the project of an *independent political force*, the idea of a *democratic political opposition*, the attempt to set up free unions independent of the Party interference and control. Ceausescu's attitude during the Polish crisis, his insolent "proletarian" demagogy and tightening of the Party totalitarian domination over socio-economic life were the most convincing confirmation of the Romanian regime's neo-Stalinist essence: "The essence of the democratic leadership of society does not consist in the existence of a greater or smaller number of political parties, but in creating and assuring the most adequate institutions and forms where the working class, the peasants, the intellectuals and all working people could speak in an organized way about problems concerning the country's development."[12]

Ceausescu's political goal has nothing to do with participatory democracy. On the contrary, Romania has evolved towards a specific variant of *bureaucratic despotism* characterized by the dissolution of civil society into the state; the dictatorial hegemony of a political minority over passive, indifferent or demoralized masses; the apotheosis of monopersonal power within an extremely centralized and highly irrational economic and political structure.

Ceausescu's first years as General Secretary could be labelled the *delusion epoch* when many intellectuals trusted the Party's promises of liberalization and nourished illusions of some democratization of the political institutions. Those were the years of the rediscovery of the *national dimension*, almost forgotten throughout the Stalinist epoch, as well as of the *humanist legacy* of the Left. Ceausescu took over an ambiguous heritage: an exhausted political system within which it was possible to move toward a *moderate reformism* or, following the Romanian communist tradition, to conjure away latent social conflicts through demagogy and/or repressive measures. A typical Stalinist personality, deeply indebted to the Party's "Old Guard," obsessed by ideological orthodoxy and organizational purity, Ceausescu had to establish an initial *modus vivendi* with the members of the existent hegemonic group in order to eliminate Alexander Draghici, the omnipotent chief of the Political Police ("*Securitate*"). His speeches abounded in references to the "sacred principles of democratic centralism and collective leadership": the Party was promising peace and tranquillity to the people while pointing to Stalinist abuses and iniquities. Intellectuals were granted more freedom, the rusty dogma of socialist realism was finally abandoned and stylistic diversity was not only tolerated but even encouraged by the communist leadership.[13]

To get rid of the "Old Guard" Party leaders, Ceausescu found it convenient to present himself as the champion of the "liberal line": the December 1967 National Conference of RCP emphasized material incentives as means to

12. Nicolae Ceausescu, *Speech delivered at the Congress of Romanian Trade Unions*, April 6, 1981 (Bucharest, 1981), p. 16-17.

13. Nicolae Ceausescu, *Report at the 9th Congress of the RCP*, July 19, 1965 (Bucharest, 1965).

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improve the economy, as well as the paramount role of market mechanisms, especially *value* and *price*. A new equilibrium was suggested for the relation between accumulation and consumption, while excessive centralism was blamed for the critical state of the economy. On the other hand, unlike other East European economists, Romanian experts never rejected the concept of *bureaucratic centralism,* since the neo-Stalinist leadership from Bucharest had never accepted the risk of a coherent attack against the main cause of economic paralysis, preferring to tackle euphemistic "abuses" while aiming criticism at epiphenomena.[14]

The rise of the new leadership, recruited from the central Party apparatus, consolidated Ceausescu's growing personal power. This entailed the establishment of a *new pressure group* whose tentacles embraced the whole Party: the districts, the departments of the Central Committee, the political apparatus within the Army, militia, "*Securitate*," the Communist Youth Organization. The "barons" who had supported Ceausescu during his first months as General Secretary were thus frustrated in the effort to secure the absolute power its members hoped to exert over the "Supreme Leader." At the same time, the Secretariat of the Central Committee became the favorite political headquarters of the new rising group. There the mounting generation of Party bureaucrats could "select all the cadres" so to assure Ceausescu's supremacy. That has been a *secret struggle* with periodical public outbreaks expressed through the confusing game of persons and positions, and the irreducible conflict between *"historical" leaders* and *the Party apparatus*.

Within all that competition, Ceausescu sought and partly managed to appear as the exponent of the second group. In fact, he avoided any lasting identification, programming his reactions and attitudes in accordance with his own opportunist interests. Beyond any personal attachments, solemn promises, or presumed fidelites, the General Secretary followed his own goal, his *power monopoly*, his undisputed supremacy, and succeeded in strengthening his grip on the Party apparatus. The "State-socialist" society, the Romanian "*real-existierende Sozialismus*," with its ossified structures, has been the perfect milieu for the fulfillment of his "Balkanic-Bonapartist" ambitions. His political triumph has depended on the apparatus' support, his political longevity, the discretionary character of his power, his *integrity* and above all, his *irremovability*. These are all conditioned by the ability to manipulate that group, by the creation and maintenance of a state of *permanent panic*, of *mutual suspicion*, of *fear of responsibility*, and of *moral debilitation*.

The regime's most sensitive point is neither culture nor the ideology, but the *control of the repressive infrastructure*. That is the real indicator of who really holds power. The foundation of the State Security Council as an independent organ, the appointment of devoted people at the head of that Council and of

14. Cf. Andrew Arato, "Understanding Bureaucratic Centralism," in *Telos*, No. 35 (Spring 1978); György Markus, "Planning the Crisis. Remarks on the Economic System on the Soviet-type Societies," in *Praxis International,* vol. I, No. 3, October 1981; Charles F. Sabel and David Stark, "Planning, Politics, and Shop-Floor Power: Hidden Forms of Bargaining in Soviet-Imposed State-Socialist Societies," in *Politics & Society*, vol. 11, No. 4, 1982.

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the Ministry of Internal Affairs, inaugurated a more "liberal" period. All that deceptive political game, all those stratagems and manoeuvres, were meant to prepare the great movement of 1968, the April Plenum of the C.C., when "liberalization" reached its climax and Ceausescu was recognized as the RCP's uncontested leader. Patrascanu's rehabilitation was meant to represent less the premise for a moral reconstruction or an incentive for radical self-criticism of the regime, but rather, the most convenient opportunity for Dej's demystification and thereby the propulsion of the new leader as the advocate and symbol of "socialist humanism" and "revolutionary justice."

The Patrascanu trial is important for an understanding of the Stalinist frame-ups and especially the meaning of the rehabilitations undertaken by Ceausescu in April 1968. Without overemphasizing this case, it can be said that Patrascanu fell victim to the basic repressive tendency of the last period of "classical" Stalinism: the campaign against "bourgeois nationalism" and its equally abhorred counterpart, "rootless cosmopolitism" (the Gomulka-Spychalski affair in Poland, the Rajk trial in Hungary, the allegations of a Zionist conspiracy during the Slansky affair in Czechoslovakia, the implicit and explicit content of anti-Titoist propaganda). As already mentioned, what the RCP leaders were attacking in Patrascanu's person was the very notion of the intellectual, maniacally identified with the *unreliable intruder*, lacking "revolutionary intransigence" in the long run, and *objectively* the *potential traitor*. The political and ideological significance of the Patrascanu affair in *terrorist pedagogy* was to provide beside the simultaneous right-wing and leftist deviation reproached to the Pauker-Luca group, a faultless synthetical image of the *internal enemy*. The whole Stalinist tradition had been haunted by the obsession of the internal enemy, the hidden conspirator, the Trojan horse fixation: the belief that a different opinion was tantamount to a different option eventually involving the temptation of capitulation and treason. Intellectuals inclined to independent thought, lacking that peculiar Stalinist vocation for the masochist sacrifice of the intellect, were convicted as arch-enemies of the very ideal for which they had abandoned their social origins and joined the revolutionary movement.

The ambiguity of Romanian communism consists precisely in its split between certain "democratic" features of international politics, the refusal to accept Soviet hegemonism and the promotion of dialogue instead of rivalry, on the one hand, and the Party's total powerlessness to introduce democratic reforms and to humanize the system. The origins of this ambivalence is in the absence of a democratic tradition within the RCP, in the *conservation* and *consolidation* of Stalinist institutions and values under new conditions. Hence, Romanian "national communism" has to be seen as a modernized variant of Stalinism, actually a neo-Stalinist regime, exclusive and obtuse, obscurantist and intolerant. This has been demonstrated particulary since the mini-Cultural Revolution (July-November 1971) — one of the most grotesque neo-Stalinist outbursts. The gradual distancing from Moscow has resulted in a *paranoid psychology of permanent menace* — a state of *continual mobilization* and the

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heightening of the regime's repressive-dictatorial features.

Ceausescu's cult of personality, far greater than anything practiced in other communist countries (with the notorious exception of North Korea) seems to be inspired both by Ubu's dubious glory and by Ionesco's mechanical-absurd situations. The stupid-adulatory phraseology, the odes and the hymns for the "beloved leader" and his clan, foster the General Secretary's unhealthy vanity and compel the Romanian people to experience a permanent propagandistic nightmare. The political demagogy, forged during the initial years of Stalinism, has been *refunctionalized* in order to serve the new hagiography. The RCP 12th Congress (November 1979) symbolized the acme of Ceausescu's personal power, the fulgurating ascent of a new generation of leaders, frustrated of any genuine political project, lacking any guiding ethical values or personal strategic options, active supporters of the highly original experiment of "dynastic socialism" in Romania. The stake is *power*, and power depends on the General Secretary's whims (not to mention the leading positions held by members of the President's family at the head of the Department of Cadres of the Central Committee and in other key areas). Romanian political life is contaminated by a despairing Byzantinism: all pervasive corruption, unbelievable nepotism, continual abuses, most loathsome intrigues, infinite contempt for democratic principles, indifference for the masses' living standard. All of this confers an unconfoundable stamp to the latest period of the country's social history.[15] On the other hand, there are certain phenomena which leave room for hope and suggest possibilities for change: political and economic radicalization of the working class (the strike in Valea-Jiului in 1977, the riots at Motru in 1981, etc.); unrest among the Romanian intelligentsia, especially within the Writers' Union, resulting in the decision to dissolve the Party organization of that association; reactions against the growing pauperization and the open revolt against the price increases.

Romanian communism was *ab initio* faced with the dilemma: either integration in the national social, political, and intellectual life, or unconditioned, fanatical devotion for Moscow. Its historical destiny confirmed the decisive option for the second alternative, its commitment to the interests of the Soviet

15. It is not necessary to list here the huge amount of sycophantic subliterature which celebrated Ceausescu's birthday in 1978: See *Omagiu Presedintelui Nicolae Ceausescu* (Bucharest, 1978) and the increasingly embarassing hagiography dedicated to the presidential couple. It is enough to discriminate between the serious investigations of Romania's social-economic and political situation and certain apologetical writings, generally inspired by Ceausescu's "Office of Foreign Propaganda." The first category is the only one which deserves to be taken into consideration: the stuides published by Kenneth Jowitt, including the debate edited by him; *Social Change in Romania, 1860-1940* (Berkeley, 1978); Daniel M. Nelson, *Democratic Centralism in Romania: A Study of Communist Local Politics* (Boulder, 1980). Noteworthy are certain interesting interpretations of the evolution of the Romanian economic-social system: cf. John M. Montias, *Economic Development in Communist Romania* (Cambridge, Mass., 1967) and Trond Gilberg, *Modernization in Romania since World War II* (New York, 1975). The latter is a remarkably well-informed study of the decision-making process under Ceausescu's authoritarian leadership. An excellent account of political and intellectual life in contemporary Romania has been provided by the Romanian historian and dissident, Vlad Georgescu: *Politica si istorie. Cazul comunistilor români. 1944-1977* (Politics and History. The Case of Romanian Communists. 1944-1977, München, 1981).

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Union, the enduring identification with the Stalinist tradition subsequently transfigured into a vainglorious political substitution. The pretensions to national autonomy and the *simulated* divorce with Moscow (Romania is a loyal and disciplined member of the Warsaw Pact as well as of the Comecon) actually coincided with the strengthening of domestic Stalinism, with an intensification of obscurantism perfectly epitomized by the *feudal-byzantine mythology* which shrouds the contemporary chapter in the drama of Romanian communism.

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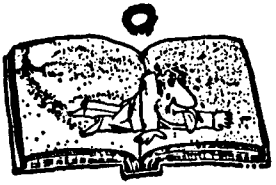

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THE FUTURE OF THE LABOR MARKET*

by Claus Offe

In West Germany, there is a good deal of disagreement among leading political groups, economic decision makers and scientific experts concerning both the future of the labor market and the role of labor in society. This disagreement bears on all of the three relevant points: the prognosis of the likely future *development,* the *policy* most suited to this development, and the *criteria* and objectives that determine whether, in fact, a development could be judged as positive or indeed desirable.

In this discussion, the first of these three points is the least controversial. Quite a number of contemporary publications in Germany feature the famous graph, developed in 1982 by the Federal Labor Agency's Institute for Labor Market and Vocational Research, which depicts labor market trends for the years 1965 to 2000. This graph provides clear enough proof: even on the basis of quite unrealistic economic assumptions (an average real growth of 4 to 5 percent in the eighties) and equally unrealistic, as well as hardly desirable, political circumstances (a drastic reduction in the number of foreign workers), a situation of full employment could not be achieved until 1995 at the earliest. Until that time, the graph suggests, we will have to learn to cope with (increasing) mass unemployment as a permanent way of life. Simple mathematical calculations indicate that the systems of social security (and some areas of public policy) will simply collapse under the effects of such a level of unemployment. Assumptions and expectations about a similar fate for the system of political institutions and certain elements of the political culture seem hardly less plausible. Given the overwhelming convincing power of the economic, financial and demographic data and projections, differences of response to the question "What will happen if nothing happens?" are relatively minor and generally of a cosmetic kind.

As these differences of opinion become more marked, the following two questions are asked: How can full employment be re-established? And, is full employment really desirable? It is interesting to note that the disagreements that arise out of these questions cut across the politico-economic blocs of both the political party system and the labor market. Questions about the political feasibility and desirability of a full employment market economy clearly touch on the foundations of the social order, and to a degree unprecedented in West Germany since the early fifties. They also bear on the two-sided allocation problem with which all societies have to grapple: the distribution of human labor power to work tasks, as well as the distribution of the outcome of

* This essay will appear early next year in Claus Offe, *Disorganised Capitalism*, edited John Keane (Basil Blackwell, Oxford). It was published originally as "Perspektiven auf die Zukunft des Arbeitsmarktes", *Merkur*, 5 (1983), pp. 489-504. Translated by John Keane.

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this labor — monetary income, as well as the goods and services that it can buy — to workers and their household members.

Orthodoxy

'Orthodoxy' is an apt description of that position that embraces the proven wisdom of the past, judging this knowledge to be generally capable of indicating paths leading to the future, even under exceptional circumstances of crisis. From a philosophical viewpoint, any orthodoxy is founded on the confident assumption that one can rely upon the accumulated experience and reference knowledge of the past — or, at any rate, that there is no equivalent substitute. This self-confidence feeds upon simple phrases and suggestive imagery. Consider the following example: "Today's profits are tomorrow's investments and the jobs of the future" (Helmut Schmidt). Such stock phrases not only function as convenient interpretations of the past; they also stimulate optimistic expectations about the future. They stabilize the hegemonic political order and insulate it against doubts or challenges. They construct a disciplined perception of what is normal and what can be expected. Finally, these kinds of phrases reinforce the self-confidence of elites and the patience of non-elites. Even though there may be doubts about the empirical validity of what is considered normal, it remains difficult to synthesize these doubts into a coherent image of normality of a *different* kind. Orthodoxies thus acquire a counterfactual validity immune to the facts, to the point where they can become zealously blinded to all consequences, a disposition that Max Weber called an "ethics of conviction" (*Gesinnungsethik*).

Serious objections can be raised today against the orthodoxy associated with Schmidt's postulated correlation between profits, investments and jobs. These objections can be quickly enumerated and corroborated by studying the pages of any of the better daily newspapers and by drawing up a list of common questions. First of all, concerning those "profits of today," the following queries arise: Are these profits really being generated? If not, how can they be supported politically? Through a Keynesian strategy or by supplying a "favorable framework" for investors? In both cases, it must be asked: Are governments successful in obtaining a political mandate for themselves, and for how long? What happens if the "upturn" in economic growth comes, but turns out to have no bearing on employment levels, taking place, as it were, behind the backs of the working (or rather non-working) population? Then, concerning "tomorrow's investments": Will they be real or financial investments, and abroad or at home? Are there real markets for these investments? Which quantities of investment can be expected in view of the rapidly growing capital productivity (micro-electronics)? Would not the large excess capacities which currently exist first have to be filled before additional investments can take place? Finally, about those "jobs of the future": Where could they possibly be created, and in what quantities? Is it not the case that these investments will have a rationalizing effect by further eliminating jobs? While a really convincing theory of the secular stagnation of industrial growth probably does not now exist, a careful and honest response to all of these ques-

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tions would make it clear that exactly this type of theory is needed today.

Another standard argument of economic and socio-political orthodoxy is that wages are too high and that "everybody" (read: employees and the welfare state) is living beyond their means. To address this problem would be to generate full employment as a logical consequence. "If someone sells oranges at too high a price," remarked an opinion pollster-turned-politician economist recently, "and cannot find any buyers as a result, it would seem strange to maintain that oranges had run out." From this viewpoint, the claim that there are too few jobs would seem equally bizarre. It is easy to detect the error implicit in this example of the high-priced oranges. While the production and marketing of oranges can perfectly well be synchronized with expected demand (which can in turn be adjusted through the price mechanism), this is not so for the supply side of labor markets. The number of workers in search of employment is not the result of calculations about the "saleability" of available labor power in the market. As most economists are well aware, there is "no supply function of labor power that could be determined on the basis of utility calculations of workers alone" (R. Hickel). In other words, workers in a capitalist society do not have the option *not* to sell their labor power, and neither do they have the option of living on an income that results from a market-clearing price. This means, contrary to the market-clearing equilibrium price of commodities, that there is not one definite equilibrium wage but three (usually different) wage equilibria. This is because, first, a wage is in equilibrium if it can satisfy all those needs of households which are regarded as socially necessary and legitimate. Equilibrium exists, secondly, if all workers find employment and, thirdly, if the sum of the output of "wage goods" is equivalent to the total wage income generated by the economy. The point is, however, that there is no *global* equilibrium between these partial equilibria. Any reference to *the* equilibrium wage therefore verges on demagogy.

In almost every capitalist country, economic indicators covering the period 1968 to 1979 confirm the conclusion that capital has fared worse in the struggle over distribution. This development may be welcomed (as delaying an otherwise imminent underconsumption crisis) or regretted (as a cause of the present-day crisis of underaccumulation). Nevertheless, no therapy follows from this diagnosis. It is hardly possible to adopt Thatcher's anti-union measures which, in any case, have so far not resulted in a single success at the level of employment. The fact that the politico-economic orthodoxy expresses disapproval of the fact that workers' organizations (when and where they *can*) attempt to squeeze out as many "compensations" as possible in return for the "negative utility" of labor performed is, in itself, quite astonishing. For this kind of behavior conforms, after all, not only to the liberal doctrine of the egoistic-rational maximization of utilities but also, in particular, to the classical economic view of labor as a "grief," as the complete opposite of "amusement" (A. Marshall). The suggested therapy of "wage cuts" is also unconvincing, for the simple reason that the distributive gains of labor against capital since the late sixties have undoubtedly been for labor a victorious battle in a war that

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it has not *won*. Capital, which is now reconquering its lost political and economic territory, is about to win that war over distribution.

The orthodox position utilizes similar arguments to criticize the alleged hypertrophies of the welfare state, which is said to be in need of restriction or even progressive dismantlement. In alarmist tones, neo-liberal policy-makers demand that the wheel of the welfare state must be stopped. If this were in fact to be achieved, the results would be highly ambiguous. Economically speaking, this dismantling of the welfare state would abolish a buffer that functions as a demand stabilizer. Politically speaking, the abolition of the welfare state would eliminate a mechanism that has served to secure social peace and stability in West Germany and elsewhere. It would be an experiment whose costs would be extremely high and whose outcome would be quite uncertain.

The orthodox position — which seeks a restoration of full employment as soon as possible and by the drastic reinvigoration of market mechanisms, if necessary — is also inspired by claims concerning possible product innovations and unsatisfied needs for goods and services. The claim is that there is a virtually unlimited growth potential for marketable goods and services. Certainly no sceptic is likely to counter this view with a theory of the *global* exhaustion of demand for industrial goods. It can nevertheless be asked, with reference to West European markets, "What is to be produced and marketed?" The effects of demand saturation cannot be overlooked here.

They tend to reduce the absorption capacity of the market to the level of a demand for replacements. Moreover, durable consumer goods are increasingly imported from Third World and semi-developed countries where they can be produced, in the long run, at lower costs. Further saturation effects emanate from phenomena described by Fred Hirsch as the "social limits to growth." The use value of many goods declines the more they are broadly used: the fewer cars on the roads, for example, the greater the use value of one's own car. As long as the present income distribution remains intact — making it more egalitarian no doubt runs completely counter to the premises of orthodox political economy — new markets can be opened up neither by supplying new social strata with existing products nor by stimulating consumption among existing consumer groups. New markets could be achieved only with predominantly *new* products. In order to achieve anything like that stimulation effect upon growth and employment (as was the case in the past, for instance, with automobiles, synthetic fibers and other substances, as well as television and other entertainment electronics), new products would nowadays have to display some rather unlikely overall properties. Namely, they would have to be capable of mass consumption, their production would need to be *both* labor intensive and capital intensive, while neither their raw materials nor their use or disposal could legitimately give rise to further economic, health, or ecological problems.

Thinking up possible products that would satisfy all these ecnomic and use-value criteria is an entertaining party game. More often than not, this kind of game ends with its participants giving up, simply because, aside from a few

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technological utopias (individual air travel, TV-telephones, etc.) they cannot think of anything that would not violate the raw materials or ecology criteria (which would be the case with goods such as disposable textiles or furniture), and whose production would at the same time allow for high rates of capital absorption (a condition that is absent, for instance, in the production of long-lasting cars and almost all services). It is hard to imagine new industrial products designed for mass consumption that could also trigger a future wave of growth and employment.

The conclusion is confirmed indirectly by the fact that today the growing sectors of industrial production, as well as those considered to have a high growth potential, are predominantly those in which purchasing decisions do not rest with the consumer, but are in the hands of state policy makers. Markets for new products are unlikely to be created by industrial enterprises researching the needs of individual consumer households and offering them the corresponding products. New products are developing primarily through state planning and guarantees for (the biggest portions of) development costs and product sales. The armaments industry probably comes closest to this "industrial utopia of an economy without customers" (K. Novy). But the same process, interestingly, is evident in those politically created "markets" in areas of infrastructural investment, such as transport, new communications media and, especially, energy. The shared characteristics of these politically guaranteed markets for industrial products — which may also include products geared to environmental protection, hospitals, schools and the police — is that (not unlike the situation in many markets for agricultural products) they seek to reduce the risk of producers' sales being jeopardized by consumers becoming saturated or desiring changes in existing patterns of consumption. A further advantage of this state investment and state-sanctioned "authoritative consumption" is that markets for private complementary goods (e.g., highway construction equipment, heating and reception devices in energy and communication systems) are often opened up at the same time.

On the other hand, however, a characteristic feature of these "markets" is that state policies will from now on have to assume responsibility for the *positive* use value (as well as harmlessness) of the products and systems of an increasingly socialized, compulsory consumption of civilian (and other) technologies and investments. The "politicization of industrial production" (H. Kitschelt) is a two-sided process. On the one side, there is the desire of stagnating industries to obtain politically guaranteed sales while, on the other side, there are the protest politics of new social movements who form themselves into an "anti-productivist" alliance in defense of humane, peaceful, ecological and other values. Industry's call for politically secured markets is certainly pressing enough. According to the 1982 annual report of the Confederation of German Industry (BDI): "Where the market is incapable of resolving questions about acceptance — such as can be the case with large-scale technological projects — it must be up to the politicians to make the decision, and not to shirk their political responsibility by postponing the decision or foisting it

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onto courts or experts." No lesser sense of urgency is displayed in the reactions triggered so far by the strategy of quasi-public reindustrialization. This urgency is expressed in the widespread recent protests against "administrative reindustrialization" projects, whether in the form of energy (nuclear reactors), transportation (airports, city highways, canals), or mass communications and the mass surveillance of citizens made possible by new communication and information technologies. These reactions have definitely altered the internal balance of power in West Germany and, in this respect, they have certainly rendered questionable the orthodox supposition that industrial markets are virtually inexhaustible in their potential.

The assumption that growth and full employment are unquestionable values in themselves or, at least, indispensable conditions of progress, completes the orthodox vision of a path of development leading into an industrial future. I do not wish to enter here into a normative discussion of this particular assumption. It is probably an empirical fact that a large majority of German *citizens* would prefer growth and full employment rather than their opposite, although this is not likely to play an important role. Rather, the decisive question is: What guarantee, if any, is there that the strategically relevant *collective* actors — governments, employers, unions — do indeed perceive the "collective goods" of growth and full employment as their prime objectives and, on the basis of such consensus, are prepared to undertake a "joint action" that would lead to a new phase of industrial growth? Again, the evidence on this point is ambiguous. A growth and full employment priority is perhaps most unequivocally endorsed within the state apparatus because, in order to satisfy the state's own financial, economic and political interests, state policy makers must address problems of growth and employment. Of course, the same financial and economic interests of the state itself are simultaneously opposed to an active employment policy that would have to be implemented *within* the public sector. On the employers' side, it is true that there is a rational interest in growth. Employers' interest in full employment is, however, at best a conditional one, especially since, in spite of many predictions, mass unemployment has so far not sparked off any organized sociopolitical conflicts endangering capital, and is unlikely to do so in the future. No doubt, employers' *associations* often publicly express an interest in reducing the high rate of youth unemployment, which they fear will turn considerable proportions of entire age segments into permanently unemployable "dropouts" from society. Otherwise, employers are openly advantaged (and little disadvantaged) by one of the *causes* of unemployment (namely, the introduction of labor-saving innovations), as well as by its continued existence. For employers can externalize the social costs of unemployment almost completely by unloading these costs onto the unemployed and other third parties. While this situation could be changed only by means of costly — and therefore at this stage hardly realizable — reforms of the ways in which the welfare state is financed, the advantages that employers can and do derive from unemployment are enormous. At the plant level, employees' anticipa-

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tion of the possibility of being laid off results in a marked improvement in rates of sick leave, work discipline and of personnel turnover. At the level of wage negotiations, wage increases have clearly shown a downward trend and, as a rule, are now below the rate of inflation; this means that any possible increases in labor productivity can accrue to employers without additional (wage) costs. In this connection, finally, the political arena is likely to be the most decisive for employers, given that a high rate of unemployment exerts a continuously strong pressure on any government to pursue policies in accordance with its own financial and electoral interests, policies that benefit the "investment capacity of capital" and thus lend at least some credence to the goal of generating new jobs. Overall, then, these advantages of unemployment to employers make it seem rather improbable that there is any effective, positive interest in full employment among representative economic associations of capital.

The position of the trade unions appears to be quite different and entirely unequivocal. Is it not the case that their most basic interest is in a strong demand for labor power and high growth rates, simply because it is upon these factors that any future scope for negotiations over distribution depends? To answer this question positively does not mean *a priori* that unions have also developed (or even could develop) the institutional structures to serve as effective "vehicles" for these interests. In fact, the contrary is suggested by the extraordinary difficulties which have accompanied trade union movement attempts to formulate a unified plan for generating employment by reducing work time. Quite apart from whether a reduction in work time *would* actually lead to additional employment, it would be obtainable only at the cost of a (relative) wage cut offered by the unions. This means that individual employees would have to sacrifice proportion of their present (or future) income in order to extend their (uncertain) help to an indefinite number of the (presently or future) unemployed.

This sacrifice requires more than "solidarity" (which in itself is difficult enough to achieve); it requires altruism, and that is something for which interest associations, generally speaking, are very poorly suited. This is especially true of trade unions, because in each individual member's case the personal gain which could be derived from this sacrifice of income (possibly a few additional hours of free time per week) is not equally attractive for everyone at the already high level of "leasure time allowance" that has been achieved. There is an additional reason: the prospective, do not themselves belong (or belong only nominally) to the very trade union organization which would be required to commit its members to additional wage sacrifices (and at precisely a time when real wages are shrinking in any case). For these reasons it appears unlikely that, caught in this difficult strategic situation, the unions have the institutional structures and necessary political power as well as the interest to bring about full employment.

Given these difficulties associated with the orthodox view of industrial society — an orthodoxy oriented towards the core values of growth and full

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employment — could it not be that it is deluding itself about the institutional foundations of those allies on which it would have to rely for the realization of its ideas? If this is indeed the case, then the orthodox view would be left with little more than the experiences and proven theories of the past and possibly, a blind confidence in their future validity. It would, however, lack the economic, technological, political, moral institutional conditions and resources necessary for the projection of this past into the future.

Realism

Such suspicions, at any rate, are raised by the "realist" opponents of orthodoxy, who appear to be quickly gaining ground, particularly in *both* the two major West German parties , the CDU and the SPD. I am using the term "realism" *without* any positive evaluative overtones to describe positions which soberly try to accept new facts, to discard old interpretations, hopes and expectations, and to acquire a fundamentally new orientation whenever "reality" appears to demand it. In contrast to the orthodox position, the realist approach is concerned with questions about socio-political values, and the criteria of progress. "Realists" think in terms of discontinuities and breaks, and they give little credit to supposedly timeless theories and principles.

What, then, is the verdict of the realistic approach on the future of work and the labor market? In the first place, there is a general readiness to abandon a seemingly futile resistance to economic "facts". Consequently, it is suggested that state policy should cease aspiring to the impossible, such as political guarantees of (the restoration of) full employment. Whereas the premise that the state should actively secure full employment was the supporting pillar of the "mixed economy" and of "modern capitalism" (A. Shonfield) on both sides of the Atlantic during the entire post-war period, it is now admitted and even proclaimed by the "realists" that politics can no longer guarantee full employment. This is not only because the Keynesian instruments have become blunt, but also because there are no *alternative* ways of achieving this goal. The new realism is just as unsympathetic as the old orthodoxy to the trade unions' struggle for wages and more employment, although their respective motivations are quite different. The orthodox position fears that trade union power might block the path leading back to full employment, whereas the realists argue that this path does not exist anyway, and that this insight cannot be heeded generally until the unions are forced to overcome their false notion of a well-managed growth-and-full-employment version of capitalism. Similar criticisms of the illusory "productivism" of the labor movement can be heard from left groupings — including from within the non-union faction of the Social Democratic Party.

The labor market policies of the realist approach contrast sharply with the orthodox position. Whereas the latter aims at an *integration* of the unemployed into an at least stable army of employed — however this may be brought about — the realist position thinks more in terms of *excluding* labor from the market,

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that is, reducing that part of the population which is in fact (or would like to be) gainfully employed. The favored candidates to be discarded from the ranks of the supply side of the labor market are well-known. First in line are foreigners, followed by women (particularly housewives), older workers and young people. A "flexible" reduction of the paid working time of the latter three groups is also envisaged.

There is some sociological realism in this strategy, insofar as it interprets the present stage of society's development (in the words of the prominent CDU politician, Späth) as a "transition phase", during which "industrial society will have to mature into a post-industrial information society". The obvious follow-up question about what is to happen to this "rejected" labor power, and how it is to be secured economically and socially, receive a number of different responses. The simplest solution would be to let the problem solve itself and, since necessity is the mother of invention, to hope that people will practice the "art of coping" (Späth). In so doing, they would at the same time help institutions over a "rough period". "The freedom of action which people create for themselves by way of alternatives and the shadow economy provides the institutions with additional time for self-transformation and self-adaptation", as another well-known CDU thinker, Kurt Biedenkopf, has put it. Another tendency recommends that family policy provide, so to say, the redundancy payments to (female) labor power withdrawn from circulation — payments to be made if not exactly in money then in the symbolic currency of "social recognition". The foundation of this tendency is clearly to be found in those Catholic groupings within the CDU which have a strong commitment to social policy. Thus, one reads in recent policy document of the Catholic Labor Movement (*KAB*) that it is necessary to redefine the overly "narrow" understanding of work as gainful employment, and that all unpaid services rendered in education, care and nursing, as well as housework and the holding of honorary offices should be recognized as "meaningful" and "socially useful", and therefore also worthy of inclusion in GNP calculations. This demand overlaps to a certain extent with a third variant, one which is concerned with the "cost-saving" integration of "rejected" labor power into state-organized social services. The most fervent exponent of this idea is the Berlin Senator for Social Affairs, Fink, and in this he is supported by Späth. According to them, "it is possible to make up for the loss of teaching hours, to reach security planning targets ahead of time, to keep nursing costs within limits and to speed up environmental programs with the help of the unemployed of the transitional period". This list reveals clearly that this tendency is thinking of relatively unskilled, inferior and socially insecure auxiliary services which, in addition, may not even be entirely voluntary, and which are to be remunerated on a wage scale which permits further savings or staff cuts within the state sector. Among these trains or thought, which seem to originate from a mixture of "black" and "green" political motives, some blue-liberal patterns can also be detected, as for instance in Dahrendorf's discovery that individual self-development and "freely chosen activity" (which is remunerated intrin-

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sically, rather than through wages) are made possible by the "disappearance of the working society."

The problem of growing unemployment, however, will hardly be solved quite so cheaply. Aside from the fact that it seems simply cynical to portray the process of a blind and spontaneous "dualization" of society — its division into job-holders and "the superfluous" who must practice the art of coping — in such glowing terms, there are a number of facts that refute the "realism" of the realists' calculations. To begin with, and contrary to what might be supposed, low growth rates by no means automatically lead to a drop in the proportion of the population that is gainfully employed (i.e., to a reduction of the sum of self-employed, salaried employees and unemployed workers as a percentage of the total population). As a statistical comparison of the OECD countries indicates, it is rather the countries with the *lowest* growth rates (Denmark, Sweden, the U.S.A.) which, in the seventies, experienced the most marked *positive* changes in their workforces (i.e., in their shares of the formally employed, self-employed or unemployed in the total population). (The exception was Great Britain, where there was a slight reduction in the relative size of the workforce.) This is by no means puzzling: the less work is available and the more existing conditions of employment are threatened, the greater are the economic pressures on wages and, consequently, the fewer individuals and households there are that can afford — despite their ever worsening job prospects — to abandon, in part or in whole, their (intended) participation in the labor market. In this respect, any strategy of pushing "superfluous" groups on the supply side of the labor market out of the market would have to deal not with spontaneous, parallel tendencies of withdrawal (e.g., retreat into the family), but with the fierce resistance of those who are by no means prepared to have their labor power banned from the market. Such resistance is likely to grow exactly at the point when overall demand for labor is depressed.

The second point to be emphasized is that there is no direct statistical correlation between the labor market activity rate (the share of the gainfully employed in the total population) and the rate of unemployment. It is wrong to assume that, in order to secure "full" employment, all that has to be done is to invent social "spaces" outside the labor market for those not absorbed by it, or to "pension them off" in a variety of ways. This assumption is false, because very high labor market activity rates are accompanied by low unemployment rates (in Japan, the ratio is 47.2 percent to 2.2 percent), just as, conversely, low activity rates coincide with high unemployment rates (in the Netherlands, the respective figures are 34.5 percent and 10.2 percent). This suggests that the unemployed do not tend to "flee" the labor market (and have little chance of doing so) and that those who live outside employment are not those for whom unemployment would be the most likely alternative.

As a consequence of recent warnings by feminists and others, thirdly, attention has become focused on the fact that the "realist" strategies of eliminating certain categories from the labor market are aimed directly — *after* foreign

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workers and *before* older workers — at housewives and other women. It can be said that women are the last historical wave of immigrants into the labor market, where (for this as well as for other reasons) they have secured proportionately few of the central, secure, highly placed jobs that are relatively immune from rationalization processes. There is a very close correlation between the labor market activity rates in the Western industrialized countries and the proportion of women among their gainfully employed populations. If these countries are compared on the basis of these two indicators, the result is two almost identical rank orders, commencing at the lower end of the scale with Spain (where 46 percent of the 15-64 age bracket is employed or formally unemployed and the proportion of women in the labor force is 28.5 percent) and, at the other end of the scale, Sweden, whose respective figures are 78.9 percent and 46 percent. At the same time, and as has been mentioned earlier, a certain widely held view of the social role of the family as an institution (a view reinforced perhaps by a simultaneous concern with population policy) gives rise to the suggestion that the family system should be considered a suitable place where parts of the female labor force could be transferred and accommodated. Quite apart from the fact that egalitarian and feminist values are likely to continue to mobilize considerable resistance against such plans, their implementation is also impeded by the problem that the structural absorption capacity of not only the labor market, but *also* of the family as an institution is strictly limited, and is bound to be reduced further still. Consider the not atypical case of a small family, who lives in a large city and has a modern, well-equipped household and service facilities within easy reach: How, in this case, would it be possible to tie the housewife's labor power to household and family duties for more than a relatively short "family break" within the female life cycle, especially when, at the same time, rising rents and consumption expenses generate an urgent need for income (if only in the form of "supplementary income," as women's wages are often referred to by both their husbands and employers)?

Finally, there is a fourth point: the "realist" position — not unlike many "green" proposals in this respect — has a tendency to considerably and blindly overstate the unemployment absorption capacity of self-organized, independent forms of activity (*Eigenarbeit*), a type of "freely chosen activity" that is supposed to take place outside of formal employment conditions. Here, again, it is easy to imagine the playing of a party game, whose disappointing outcome could be quite instructive. The brainstorming about personal or household-based useful activity might well begin with do-it-yourself activities — which (in the purchasing of tools, for example) often consume more earned income than they help to save. Suggested "extra-employment" activities might range from possible alternatives to formal salaried work (games, education, political and aesthetic activity, social work, club activities) to moonlighting and neighborhood assistance. A closer examination of such proposals readily reveals that all of them encounter three problems: each of these has to do with problematic distribution effects that typical households

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or individuals can overcome only within very strict limits and to a highly variable degree. The actually available scope for autonomous activity is typically constrained, first, by a shortage of material resources (such as physical space and other facilities); second,by a lack of personnel qualifications, discipline and psychological dispositions; and, finally, by the absence of institutional structures that could guarantee minimum levels of efficiency and continuity, as well as security of expectations and control among their participants. The evidence suggests that, wherever "outside" material and institutional support, accepted voluntarily, is not forthcoming, self-managed projects, autonomous initiatives among the unemployed and self-help organizations provide few grounds for optimism. The question raised recently by some left-wing German Social Democrats, "Can work be invented?" therefore cannot be answered with euphoric references to the beauty of "freely chosen activity" or to the bliss of "self-exploitation" (Dahrendorf). It can be answered, if at all, only with a negative thesis: Work cannot be "invented" individually or autonomously by those people who are then supposed to do it. Rather, people have to be provided with the appropriate institutional and material resources that would *enable* them to carry out their self-chosen activities. Any other solution would likely amont only to a camouflaging of the violence, misery and hopelessness of an economy of lifeboats, in which there would always be too few seats.

A Third Way?

If, as a consequence of these considerations, the "orthodox" perspective of integrating (at some uncertain time in the future) the labor supply through market forces appears unconvincing, and if the "realist" proposal for absorbing "excessive" supplies of labor elsewhere and outside the labor market seems neither feasible nor desirable, then the scenario is depressing indeed. Neither the labor market, nor the institutions and spheres of activity capable of relieving pressure on the labor market, have an adequate absorption capacity. As a consequence, the social mechanisms that are designed for allocating labor power to work, as well as for distributing the returns to labor power from work, no longer function properly. Since there are no viable alternatives to "working" and "living" from work, however, "surplus" labor power continues to accumulate, to a great and ever increasing degree, in exactly that place where there is no use for it: on the supply side of the labor market. Thus, the welfare state institutions designed for supporting the unemployed, the not-yet-employed, and the early-retired are faced with continuous fiscal problems, and the foundations are laid for an at least latent conflict between, on the one side, employees *and* employers who are burdened, respectively, with increasing tax contributions and rising social security taxes and, on the other, the unemployed.

This fiscal imbalance results from the operation of the traditional structural principle of social security — the fiscal linking of social security revenues to employment — which appears to have outlived its usefulness. On the revenue side of the security system, it is the level of total wages that determines the

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volume of funds available for social security transfers. On the spending side, a similar linkage derives from the fact that *claims* to benefits depend on the length of prior gainful employment; moreover, the *level* of benefits is also dependent upon the former income derived from that gainful employment. Until now, attempts were made to simultaneously maintain both types of linkages between employment and social security, while their quantitative relationship was adjusted under conditions of crisis: the social security system was stabilized by levelling rising social security taxes on the one side, and by spreading benefits more thinly, on the other. Increasing percentages of the sum total of wages were collected in the form of contributions, in order to compensate for the diminishing percentage of income-substituting transfers for the growing number of people entitled to these benefits.

This procedure makes a lot of sense as long as unemployment can be regarded as a temporary and quantitatively limited phenomenon. The more unrealistic this premise becomes, the greater the resort to the emergency solution — which is actually contrary to the basic idea of mandatory social "insurance" — of stabilizing the various branches of social security with subsidies from general tax revenues. Inherent in this kind of fiscal emergency measure (although this remains implicit) is a welcome violation of the principle of "equivalence," according to which the income of the non-employed must be linked to the (individual and collective) income of those who are gainfully employed. If this linkage of the income of the non-employed to the total income of the employed were to be severed successfully (with respect to entitlement, the level of benefits and previous income earned on the labor market), then a great deal more would be achieved than simply solving the problem of permanently overburdening the system of unemployment insurance. An egalitarian basic insurance scheme of this kind would have the status of a citizenship right to a basic income (instead of being an entitlement to benefits in exchange for contributions paid) and it would at the same time constitute a serious step in the direction of effectively relieving pressure on the supply side of the labor market. *All* strata and groups of those who are (potentially) gainfully employed — and not only housewives and other women — would be able to choose, if the question arose, whether they wished either to seek employment or, instead, to forego gainful employment; under these new circumstances, the latter option would even become tolerable in financial terms.

If this step were to be taken, the hitherto existing ties between income and work performed, a characteristic feature of market societies everywhere, would be partially broken, and the norm of equivalence that serves as a criterion of social justice (as well as of economic efficiency) would be undermined deliberately. Initially, such steps would have to be justified not so much by invoking old socialist ideals; rather, they would need to be justified with reference to the fact that the chances of earning a wage on the market have dwindled greatly, and will remain so low that they will be insufficient, even in developed welfare states, to cover the income needs of the population. The

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old principle that insists that those who do not work shall not eat only makes sense as long as there *are* adequate opportunities to acquire the necessaries of life through work. If this ceases to be the case, it is obvious that, in order to satisfy citizens' needs, the returns upon work need to be distributed in ways other than that of the exchange of labor for earned income and the social security and family systems based on that exchange system. Whoever rejects these implications would have to demonstrate either that there is some truth in the "orthodox" perspective on how to restore full employment, or that the "realist" perspective leads to more than simply a "dualization" of society, that is, to the displacement and impoverishment of large groups of labor. As I have attempted to demonstrate above, both the "orthodox" and the "realist" positions are faced with serious difficulties which prevent them from justifying either of these two possibilities.

It is, of course, easy to predict the political reactions that would be generated by this proposal for uncoupling income claims from work performed. Critics would quite easily be convinced of the likely reduction of pressure on the labor supply, so much so that they would foresee an "excessive" flight of labor power out of the labor market — which would be seen as placing excessive demands on the system of guaranteed income or "national dividends." The appropriate reply to this criticism would be that the differential between the guaranteed minimum income and the income generated on the labor market could easily be fine-tuned to prevent such consequences, should they indeed become intolerable from the point of view of democratically agreed-upon considerations of macro-economic efficiency. In addition, such undesired consequences — often referred to as "disincentive to work" effects — could be limited by means of qualitative improvements of job and working conditions. Those who remain sympathetic to the orthodox perspective might even see some beneficial consequences from this proposed uncoupling of income and work, for if finances for the guaranteed income were generated from a tax-base different from that of the volume of actual employment, then this would mean that employers would no longer be able to rid themselves of the social costs of unemployment by shifting them onto the public at large. In other words, employers themselves would have to recognize that redundant labor power and jobs rationalized out of existence still entail costs. This adjustment of the basis of calculation of the business firm might even have some employment-securing effects.

Today, these kinds of considerations concerning the need for fundamental reform can often be observed just below the surface of everyday political discourse. The limitations of the ideas presented here concerning a "third way" of solving the labor market problem consist not in the fact that they go too far, but, rather, that their proposed solution remains incomplete. This is true in two respects. First, it cannot be assumed, as a matter of course, that a monetary income guaranteed independently of gainful employment and distributed, as a citizenship right, to those sectors of the population who do not participate in the labor market, would actually be sufficient to satisfy their life needs beyond

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a civilized subsistence level, especially if the costs of maintaining the fund for "national dividend" payments were to be kept within economically justifiable limits. Secondly, even if this problem were to be overcome, only *one* dimension of the labor market problem would have been solved constructively. The labor market problem has *two* dimensions — the distribution of the means of subsistence to labor power *and* the allocation of the capacity to work to socially useful work tasks. This means that even a materially satisfactory strategy of allowing labor power to lie fallow by means of generous social policies would not only be economically inefficient; it would also fundamentally violate the human need for meaningful useful and purposeful activity.

This second aspect of the labor market problem could only be solved if the separation of claims to monetary income from the sphere of gainful employment were accompanied by the reciprocal partial uncoupling of useful activities from the nexus of monetary remuneration. If this were achieved, monetary income would not only no longer depend upon work performed in the labor market; the "means of life" would cease to be provided *exclusively* from money, but also in part *directly* from self-organized, independent labor (*Eigenarbeit*) — the allocation of whose results would not be mediated by monetary wages and purchases. This solution to the second aspect of the labor market problem has nothing whatsoever to do with an economically and socially "regressive" utopia of an economy of "small communities" providing *exclusively* for themselves.

During the past several years, the research and programmatic discussions concerning the "informal economy" and the "dual economy" (for instance, J. Huber and J. Berger in West Germany; J Gershuny, R. Pahl and J. Robertson in Britain; and A. Gorz in France) have clarified the extent to which (and the conditions under which) people can supply themselves with goods and services without having to purchase them, even in advanced industrial societies. This type of informal or "de-commodified" provision of benefits consists of use values which can substantially supplement and improve the level of material well-being which individuals and households attain through monetary income. The informal provision of goods and services has the additional advantage of ensuring that those parts of the labor potential which cannot be accommodated in the labor market are utilized in a self-determined way, and are not condemned simply to passivity. Of course, advocates of the informal economy have not always made it clear that a blind, laissez-faire process of dualization and a type of a consciously designed dual economy which is *politically* justified and reinforced are diametrically opposed models. In the first process, those sectors of the population remaining outside the sphere of contractual labor are somehow supposed to cope, survive and help themselves; at the same time, they are meant to accept, in a manner ranging from approval to indifference, moonlighting, petty crime and the grossest forms of exploitation and self-exploitation as facts of life. In contrast, in the second model, that of a politically instituted dual economy, the goal is to institutionally recognize, promote, secure and extend the limited sphere of informal,

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self-organized independent labor (*Eigenarbeit*) and, at the very least, to subject it to the same criteria of social justice which claim validity in the formal employment sector of society.

It is this opposition between a blind process of spontaneous "dualization" of society and a dual economy based on a political program which is bound to cause a parting of the "black-and-green" and "red-green" tendencies, which presently appear to be engaged in a semi-public challange of ideas concerning the future of work and the labor market. Fully developed organizational models are to be found within neither tendency. And it is difficult to say whether the continuing labor market crisis will help stimulate imagination and political inventiveness, or instead breed fatalism and cynicism and relegate increasing parts of the working class to "marginal" conditions of subsistence. Crises are always ambivalent, in that they either *increase* or *paralyze* a system's learning capacity. The latter outcome would prevail if either the stubbornness of "orthodoxy" or the "realist" position, aptly described by Fritz Scharpf as "cheerful resignation", were to remain dominant.

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INTRODUCTION TO ADORNO'S "IDEA OF NATURAL-HISTORY"

by Bob Hullot-Kentor

Missing Background

Adorno presented the "Idea of Natural-History" on July 15, 1932, at a meeting of the Frankfurt chapter of the Kant Society.[1] The society's yearly register, published in its journal *Kant-Studien*, is an important document. That year its register lists Paul Tillich, who supervised Adorno's inaugural dissertation, as the local director. Along with a variety of details, the society's business address appears as "Horkheimer, Viktoria Allee 17." A year later the register's column for Frankfurt is blank except under the heading for local directors. There, in parentheses, the ominous takes pains to prove its alliance with discretion: "(Director to be chosen.)"[2]

Original-History of Style

The style of Adorno's early essay can be understood from the perspective of his mature work, which is emphatically artificial. His last writings, particularly *Negative Dialectics* and the *Aesthetic Theory*, are written at the limits of German syntax: Articles are deleted;[3] the reference of pronouns is consistently obscure, on occasion irreducibly ambiguous; prepositional objects are as a rule elliptical; the subject of a clause may be deleted and reappear in the form of a relative clause;[4] the reflexive pronoun is deferred until the end of the sentence;

1. Adorno's essay has already received substantial attention. Cf. Susan Buck-Morss, *The Origins of Negative Dialectics* (New York, 1977), chapter 3; Fred R. Dallmayr, *Twilight of Subjectivity* (Amherst, 1981), pp. 211-219; Friedemann Grenz, "Die Idee der Naturgeschichte," in *X. Deutscher Kongress für Philosophie,* hrsg. Kurt Huebner and Albert Menne (Hamburg, 1973), pp. 344-350; W. Martin Luedke, *Anmerkungen zu einer Logik des Zerfalls* (Frankfurt, 1981), pp. 69-85.

2. *Kant-Studien,* vol. 38 (1933), p. 498.

3. E.g., "Kritik am ontologischen Bedürfnis triebt zur immanenten der Ontologie," *Negative Dialektik,* G.S. VI, p. 104. How to translate this line and many others in *Negative Dialektik* is a hard question. Ashton's current translation of the work is admirable for having dragged the book into English, but culpable for having strangled it on arrival. His translation drops clauses and whole lines (e.g., pp. 35, 76, 99, 143); translates terms arbitrarily (e.g., *Vermittlung* as transmission); and changes hard thought into simple incomprehensibility by dividing the text into paragraphs where there are none. Altogether it is a model of conformist translation. Adorno's line might be rendered: "Critique of the ontological need leads to an immanent one of ontology." Ashton makes it both homey and pedantic: "Our critique of the ontological need brings us to an immanent critique of ontology itself." *Negative Dialectics,* p. 97.

4. "Ueber die Seinsphilosophie hat keine Gewalt, was sie generell, von aussen her abwehrt, anstatt in ihren eigenen Gefüge mit ihr es aufzunehmen, nach Hegels Desiderat ihre eigene Kraft gegen sie zu wenden," *ibid.,* p. 104. The "das" of the first clause that would normally correspond to the "was" of the second clause is missing. It is perhaps not possible to translate this sentence into English and maintain the shock of the first clause. A plausible translation, however, could run: "What would reject ontology, generally, from an external position, instead of taking it on in its own structure, turning its own force against itself according to Hegel's desideratum, has no power over the philosophy of being," *ibid.,* p. 97.

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the negating *nicht* may appear, strangely, at the beginning of the sentence;[5] foreign, classical, and archaic terms are constantly used; adverbs are positioned ungrammatically and accordingly accented.[6] All of these techniques break the normal fall of the sentence and require that it be re-read and reflected upon.[7] In agreement with Benjamin's dictum that "argumentation is fruitless," the entire structure of assumption, development, proof and conclusion has been discarded for a dialectic of the object itself.[8] Any subjectively imposed order, Adorno wrote, is a mask for chaos. This critique extends to the usual apparatus of transitions. All of the variations on phrases such as "now we can see" become indicators of a loss of the matter at hand. They rarely occur in Adorno's writings; the result is that the progression of thought initially appears fragmented and abrupt.[9] In the "Idea of Natural-History," this style had not been mastered. The artificial appears under its regressive aspect; it has an archaic rigidity, a trace of which could always be found in Adorno's personal manner, which Bloch once summed up as his "mandarin formality." The origins of this frozen posture is fear.

Dressing Up

This linguistic posture establishes the continuity between Adorno's early and later style and makes this early essay immediately recognizable to readers of his mature works. But the internal dynamic of this posture also explains the aspect of this essay that will be least familiar. Many will be surprised by phrases calling for an "ontological re-orientation of history" or promoting "ontological dignity." These lines must appear extraordinarily com-promising with that same Heidegger who was later drawn and quartered in the *Jargon of Authenticity*. To compare these two works from opposite ends of Adorno's career in just one regard: where the call to "dignity," just quoted, copies rhapsodic appeals in *Being and Time* to the sublimity of being, the same phrase in Adorno's later work is an object of analysis: "Dignity was never anything more than the attidude of self-preservation aspiring to be more than that."[10] These two

5. "Nicht reicht dabei aus, der Seinsphilosophie zu demonstrieren so etwas gebe es nicht wie das, was sie Sein nennt," *Negative Dialektik,* p. 104. Cf. Ashton, p. 97.

6. "Deren Geschichte schon ist reich an Begriffen," *ibid.,* p. 97.

7. This discussion, and examples, of Adorno's style come largely from Hermann Deuser, *Dialektische Theologie* (Munich, 1980), pp. 118-128.

8. Cf. *Negative Dialectics, op.cit.,* p. 403.

9. Where this type of phrase does occur in English editions it usually indicates faulty translation (cf. "As we have seen. . .," *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* p. 43). But this is not always the case. Neither is the abruptness of Adorno's language always justified. It does not always lead into the object. The abandonment of argumentative form turns the text's integrity over to its density, a particularly vulnerable form that magnifies the slightest loss of tension. Transitional sentences, where they do occur in Adorno's writings, have just this diluting effect. Adorno will occasionally try to take up the slack by increasing the abruptness of the sentence. The sentence quoted in footnote 3, for example, begins a new section and actually has a transitional function. Adorno tries to cover up its function by heightening the abruptness of the rhetoric. Where the sentence implies some form of criticism in apposition to immanent criticism and gains its tension from this implied apposition, no apposition is actually involved.

10. *Jargon of Authenticity,* translated by Knut Tarnowski and Frederic Will (Evanston, 1973), p. 161.

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positions *vis-à-vis* Heidegger are not, however, as distinct as they at first appear. Imitation and rejection are more than opposites. While Adorno had been directly involved in the neo-ontological movement in the mid-twenties, he had fully separated himself from it by the time that he presented his lecture on natural-history. That he nevertheless ended up on this occasion dressed partially in Heideggerian uniform is explained to a degree by Leo Strauss who describes the condition of philosophy in the early 1930s: "One has to go back to Hegel to find another professor of philosophy who affected in a comparable manner the thought of Germany . . . His domination grew almost continuously in extent and in intensity . . . Eventually a state was reached which the outsider is inclined to describe as paralysis of the critical faculties: philosophizing now seems to have been transformed into listening with reverence to the incipient mythoi of Heidegger."[11]

Heidegger's philosophy was the form of mythic terror taken by the disaster of the 30s. In the "Idea of Natural-History," where myth and nature are synonymous, Adorno writes that neo-ontology is nothing "other than what I mean by 'nature' ". It is a fateful structure of existential invariables. Just as all of Adorno's writings struggle with myth, a struggle he analyzed with great concision in his study of the *Odyssey* in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, it is not surprising to find Ulysses's tactics employed in Adorno's development. The dialectic of enlightenment, the course of Ulysseus' voyage, is the production of a second natural immanence. The self develops by becoming like what it masters at the same time that it dissolves its affinity to its object. In terror, Ulysses becomes *Udeis*, "nobody," a model of Polyphemos' undifferentiated chthonic nature. Ulysses develops this unconscious self-sacrifice, that wins him a favored position with the Cyclops, as a conscious ruse. He takes Polyphemos' side against himself and offers him wine to better enjoy a slaughter that would include Ulysses himself: "Take Cyclops and drink. Wine goes well with human flesh."Ulysses exploits his self-sacrificial regression to blind the Cyclops and escape. By making himself like Polyphemos he gains power over him, destroys first nature, and differentiates himself. Yet this differentation is apocryphal. Ulysses emerges from the struggle a self-identical, invariable, force of nature in the form of self-preservation, a second immanence, that does to itself and first nature, by self-control, what it once feared from first nature: it destroys particularity. The historical voyage becomes a natural event. External mimicry becomes internal self-identical mimesis, ultimately the order of the *ratio*, which is itself a structure of the self-sacrifice of particularity to universality. In its conscious control of nature the self becomes opaque to its self-reproduction as second nature.

Where Adorno mirrors Heidegger it is in the attempt, familiar from slapstick, to draw him into movements that he would have otherwise resisted: Adorno wants to transform neo-ontology's reconciling formulation of the interwovenness of nature and history into a dialectic that presents their

11. Leo Strauss, "Kurt Riezler," in *Social Research*, 23 (1956), p. 17.

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mutual collapse. This is a conscious maneuver. Its form, however, points deeper. Like the wooden gestures of the hyper-cultivated muscle that exalts its own fear, the rigidity of Adorno's essay mimics menace. The rigidified self, internalized sacrifice, pays for its survival by forgetting that it has renounced itself in the process. The nemesis of the ruse of the dialectic of enlightenment is that the control gained over the other amounts to the forfeiture of true self-control. It is understandable, then, that Adorno comes closest to following Heidegger's lead at the central point in the essay where he would present himself most emphatically as himself. It is this point, to be discussed, that gives insight into a fundamental problem with the essay.

The "Idea of Natural-History" was published only posthumously.[12] There are good reasons why Adorno might have withheld its publication. The essay is awkwardly constructed, at points repetitive, at others almost incomprehensibly desultory; it relies on lengthy quotations; much of what is said of importance appears and better said, in works published soon after.[13] Yet the essay independently contains several important formulations and Adorno was not generally reluctant to publish his early works. It is more likely that he refrained from publishing it, in the context of what became a life long struggle with Heidegger, because of compromising Heideggerian elements. But if so, the Heideggerian phraseology would not have been decisive. Adorno could have edited it out without changing the essay's organization just as he dropped several positive references to Heidegger from his essays of the mid-twenties before allowing their republication. Moreover, there are points in Adorno's mature works where similar lines can be found.[14] A crucial element of the essay, however, that could not be excised, and in which a positive regard for Heidegger is condensed, is the term "natural-history" (*Naturgeschichte*).

Philosophical Terminology

"Natural history," in both German and English, translates *historia naturalis,* literally "the history of nature." According to the Latin and Greek sense of "history" it means much that it occasionally, and confusingly, continues to mean in modern English: the narration of an inquiry into nature, having nothing necessarily to do with any temporal dimension.[15] The German term was coined in the eighteenth century as part of a nationalist movement to displace foreign terminology that dominated intellectual language. The new

12. It was first published in Adorno, G.S., vol. 1, pp. 345-365.

13. I am particularly referring to Adorno's study of Kierkegaard. It will be a matter of dispute whether it actually precedes or follows Adorno's "Idea." The manuscript was first completed in 1930. But the edition that was eventually published was the result of massive revisions undertaken during the summer and fall of the period during which Adorno presented the "Idea." The degree to which the published edition differs from the original was something that Adorno emphasized to Krenek in a letter of September 1932: "Each sentence has been newly formulated . . . and many and precisely central parts are being fully reworked." *T.W. Adorno und Ernst Krenek. Briefwechsel* (Frankfurt, 1974), pp. 34-35. It will be necessary to compare the two versions to actually know the extent of the revisions. Unfortunately, Adorno's estate is unable to make the only known existing copy available for research. (Letter from Tiedemann.)

14. E.g., *Noten zur Literatur,* G.S., vol. XI, p. 400.

15. Karl Löwith, *Nature, History and Existentialism* (Evanston, 1966), p. 139.

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term, however, immediately acquired pressing ambiguity as the result of the changing concepts of nature and history. When nature was conceived in scientific literature as historical, in the modern sense, natural history acquired a new literal sense that conflicted with its classical meaning. The two developments, the terminological and the conceptual, coincide most emphatically in Kant's work; he was at once the first to write a scientific history of nature as a process of unending, infinite creation[16] and the most important figure, perhaps the first, to promote the formal limitation of the term's ambiguity. He proposed that its significance be restricted to the investigation of nature's self-development from primitive chaos to rational order.[17]

As Adorno points out, he is not concerned with natural history in either the classical or the Kantian sense. Rather, his interest in the term is clear from what he explains as the "idea of natural-history": to comprehend an object as natural where it appears most historical and as historical where it appears most natural. The idea is the dialectic that can be extracted from a literal analysis of the term's ambiguity: the history of nature is nature grasped as historical; natural history is the historical grasped as natural.

This formal decomposition of the term, a pun, gives an historical concept a neologistic turn. When Adorno recognized this he would have rejected the term. It is easy to imagine that Benjamin, who presumably heard the presentation, would have criticized it on just this basis. This criticism was a constant element of Benjamin's often reformulated works: in the early writings it appears, e.g. as a critique of Romantic reflexion; in the later works it can be found in his critique of the ahistorical aspect of Mallarmé's *correspondances* in comparison with those of Baudelaire. Throughout, this critique was that of arbitrary signification that is the linguistic form of the Fall; or, less theologically, the destruction of experience. What would have made Adorno's recognition of the neologistic character of this term particularly biting is that it would have converged with his own critique of Heidegger, whose work is built out of neologisms and terms transformed into neologisms by a sort of pseudo-etymology. By the time that Adorno presented the "Idea of Natural-History" he had in fact already developed this critique of Heidegger's language in the "Theses on the Language of Philosophy" (1930). "Freely posited language," — Adorno could be referring to terms like *Dasein* that claim to gain the word's depth by pursuing a literal content (*Da-sein*, being-there)[18] — "advances the philosopher's pretention to freedom from the compulsion of history."[19] Adorno repeatedly analyzes the illusoriness of this form of linguistic control. In the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in particular, Adorno analyzes this as the lnguistic form of Ulysses' regressive escape from Polyphemos. Ulysses eludes

16. Steven Toulmin and J.Goodfield, *The Discovery of Time* (London, 1965), p. 129.
17. Rudolf Eisler, *Kantlexikon* (Hildesheim, 1961), p. 380.
18. For further examples from an extensive repertoire, see Heidegger's development of *Ver-Hältnis* and *Ge-Stell* in *Die Technik und die Kehre* (Tübingen, 1976), pp. 39 and 27.
19. Adorno, G.S., vol. I, p. 368. Condensing Adorno's view of Heidegger's language is his admiration for Kracauer's unfortunately untranslatable parody: "Eifersucht ist die Leidenschaft die mit Eifer sucht, was Leiden schafft."

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death by outwitting the fatefulness of the mythical name in which the word commands the object: Ulysses exploits the distinction between sign and intention in the discovery that *Udeis* has multiple meanings. He is able to evade Polyphemos on the basis of a legalism. Yet this maneuver, while it conquers myth, does not dissolve myth. The immutable mythic word, a formula of unchanging nature, is replaced by a second formalism: "From the formalism of mythic names and ordinances, which would rule men and history as does nature, there emerges nominalism — or the prototype of bourgeois thinking."[20] The form of the nominalist term is as indifferent to its content as was the mythical word that ruled its content. The nominalist separation of form and content reappears in the idealist theory of language in which "concepts and with them words are abbreviations of a multiplicity of characteristics whose unity is constituted solely by consciousness."[21] Idealism does not solve the nominalist separation of form and content, but both camouflages and potentiates the division by positing subjectivity as the ultimate unity of language, again fully indifferent to the content of language. Hegel's own readiness to decompose terms according to their literal content, when it suited him — the best known instance is his analysis of *er-innern* — is evidence that Heidegger's linguistic innovations, rather than criticizing the idealist tradition, merely follows in its wake. In his early essay on language Adorno could claim that "Heidegger's language flees from history but never escapes it,"[22] on the same basis that he later showed that while Odysseus flees mythical nature he only reproduces it.

At the end of the essay on language Adorno writes that the philosopher may "no more take a word as simply given as invent one himself."[23] Yet "natural-history" effectively becomes such an invented term; its content is developed in the same fashion that Ulysses extracted the content of *Udeis*. It stands implicitly allied with such arch Heideggerian terms as *Dasein*. Its position in the essay would correspond to the concept of *Aufklärung* in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment* if Adorno had developed the term according to the potential of *aufklären* to mean "to empty" as well as to illuminate rather than according to the philosophical experience sedimented in the word. "Natural-history," in that it is an unconscious reflection of Heidegger, is second nature, a mythical element in Adorno's essay. It is the form of the young Adorno's autonomy, quintessential dialectic of enlightenment: self-assertion as self-denial.

Natural-History and Natural History

Just as Adorno left this essay unpublished, he also dropped the term natural-history in the form of a double entendre. In all of his later writings natural history carries the sense it has in Marx's later works, in Benjamin's study of the Baroque, and occasionally in Hegel: it is history in a natural condition. In "Theory and Practice," for example, Adorno characteristically

20. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 27.
21. Adorno, G.S., vol. 1, p. 366.
22. *Ibid.*, p. 368.
23. *Ibid.*, p. 369.

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writes of the situation "in which natural history perpetuates itself."[24] In *Negative Dialectics,* natural history occurs as society's "prolonged natural history."[25] The reason, however, that Adorno's early essay has been of particular interest is not because it and its central term were left behind, but because it contains the central elements of Adorno's mature works. The most casual comment in the "Idea of Natural-History" is portentous. Where Adorno writes here that what he has to say "will remain on the level of an attempt (*Versuch*) to solve the problem," in his later writings he names the essay (*Versuch*) as the singular modern form of philosophical consciousness. He once summarized this form as follows: "The essay as form consists in the capacity to perceive the historical, that is, manifestations of objective spirit, 'culture,' as if they were nature."[26] In the "Idea of Natural-History" Adorno developed this form for the first time following precisely the same plan that he used in *Negative Dialectics*, one of his last works: a critique of Heidegger is followed by the presentation of the central concepts of the form of the critique — respectively the idea of natural-history and the idea of negative dialectics — and concludes with interpretive models ultimately directed towards the question of the recuperation of aesthetic and metaphysical contents.

Philosophy of Nature

In the first part of the "Idea of Natural-History," Adorno develops a critique of Heidegger by situating him in the context of modern German philosophy's attempt to solve the problem of historicist relativism. Adorno formulates this problem as that of conceiving the unity of history and nature. The history that he traces is paradoxical in several regards, the first being that it shows the convergence of neo-ontology with the historicism that philosophy attempted to supercede. Noe-Kantianism, the dominant pre-World War One philosophy, attempted to rebut relativism by grounding individual autonomy in epistemological structures. Historical immanence was to be replaced by pure immanence of consciousness. Adorno begins his review of the subsequent course of philosophy with phenomenology's attempt to direct philosophy away from the logical investigation of the constructive laws of consciousness, which had resulted in a subjective formalism, towards the investigation of essential, ultimately ontic structures of being.[27] Adorno argues that phenomenology failed to overcome the neo-Kantian aporia, however, in that it likewise took the *ratio* as the starting point of its investigations. Like the neo-Kantians, phenomenology posits a dualism of nature and history. This is evident, as is its aporetic result, in Scheler's work. The question of the meaning of being could only be posed from the position of the autonomous *ratio*; the meanings subsequently produced were necessarily subjective. The attempt to assure ahistorical meaning only asserts the historically given which may,

24. Adorno, *Stichworte* (Frankfurt, 1970), p. 178.
25. Adorno, *Negative Dialectics,* p. 321.
26. Adorno, G.S., vol. 10.1, p. 242.
27. Cf. F.J. Rinteln, *Contemporary German Philosophy* (Bonn, 1970).

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furthermore, turn out to be meaningless. Up to this point neo-ontology and historicism were full antagonistic. Historicism rejected neo-ontology for dragging arbitrary philosophical elements into history. Neo-ontology, on the other hand, objected that historicism was unconscious of its ontological presuppositions. Heidegger's critique of phenomenology transformed this antagonism. Essences cannot be sought beyond history. Being is not the antithesis of history, rather they converge in *Dasein's* fundamental structure of historicity. Since the undertanding transforms every element of life into a project (*Entwurf*) of possiblity, in principle absorbing "the fullness of being's determinations", both the opposition of nature and history and of ontology and historicism should disappear along with the problem of relativism.

For Adorno, however, this is no solution. Heidegger does not overcome the problem of relativism, but simply organizes several tactics for obscuring an inability to interprete the empirical in its full multiplicity. Adorno only hints at an example of neo-ontology's limitations, briefly refering to the difficulty that Heidegger would have understanding any aspect of the French Revolution. In keeping with Adorno's comments, he might have argued that while existential historiography could, for example, follow through the authenticity of Danton's decisions, it would necessarily remain obtuse to what his decisions were about; existential interpretation would remain indifferent to political and economic mediations falling outside of the immediate context of Danton's understanding. Or, to expand Adorno's argument by pointing out another sphere that is lost to neo-ontology: for all that neo-ontology is proud of solving the problem of the opposition of mind and body by arguing that this problem is only an abstraction from *Dasein's* primordial being-in-the-world, it still turns out that when *Dasein* appears unclouded by these inauthentic categories, it has lost its body: *Dasein* is never hungry, sleepy or sexual.[28] Not only must these areas of historical-biological facticity be somehow reeled up into the project in the category of contingency, a tautological procedure, but the structure of *Dasein*, existentials such as being-towards-death, is simply the sedimentation of empirical elements that could not be penetrated. The empirical is not actually interpreted but only set up as a nexus of absolutes.

Where Heidegger claims to overcome idealism, Adorno shows that neo-ontology's fundamentally tautological mastery of contingency reveals an idealist core. The starting point of Heidegger's philosophy, like neo-Kantianism, remains autonomous reason. This is evident in neo-ontology's intention to analyze being in its totality, effectively the claim of an absolute subject, and secondly in the priority of possibility over actuality that coheres with the claim to totality. The superiority of the category over its elements explains the abstractness of neo-ontological interpretation and the tautological direction of its language, which amounts to the assertion of the identity of subject and object. This tautological form keeps ontology from being able to "interprete

28. Gunter Anders, "On the Pseudo-Concreteness of Heidegger's Philosophy," in *Philosophy and Phenomenological Research,* vol. 8, pp. 337-370.

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itself as that which it is: namely, a product of, and internally related to, the idealist *ratio*".

Historicity, then, is only an "illusory solution to the problem of the reconciliation of nature and history." In the tradition of subjectivistic idealism, it actually assumes their division at the point where categorical thought excludes facticity. Heidegger simply reduces history to nature by subsuming it under historicity. Rather than the reduction of history to a natural fact, it is necessary to be able to grasp history itself as nature and nature itself as history. This capacity would overcome the subjectivistic predominance of thought over its object. Implicitly such a capacity would be a real solution to the problem of relativism.

Immanent Criticism and Memory of Nature

Brief as this critique of Heidegger is, there is obviously a great deal to be said about it: while Adorno criticizes Heideggerian ontology as idealist according to the priority of the *ratio* evident in the pretention to totality, a critique that in its focus on the problems of contingency, actuality, and the glorification of the status quo, importantly parallels Marx's critique of Hegel, the form of Adorno's study is itself part of the idealist tradition; it is immanent criticism that has excluded the claim to totality: Heidegger's work is measured according to its own concept, historicity, yet, in contrast to the Hegelian movement of the concept, no systematic hierarchy of concepts emerges. Not only is Heidegger treated immanently, but so is the modern history of philosophy. It is measured against its claim to objectivity. As is evident with Heidegger in particular, the course of this history is, altogether, one in which the *ratio* consumes its relation to its object. However the *ratio* attempts to establish objectivity, it seals itself off from objectivity. Historically the *ratio* produces a second nature, ultimately the mythical, invariable existentials of neo-ontology. These absolutes are meanings inserted into reality. They are allegorical, to be conceived as part of the "original-history of signification" explained in the essay's second part. This second nature is unable to interprete itself as what it is because its starting point is the *ratio*.

If this history seems familiar, this is because the "Idea of Natural-History" is a sustained reflection on the dialectic of enlightenment. The history of German philosophy that it presents is an early sketch of Ulysses' voyage: the historical voyage of the development of the *ratio* in which history becomes second nature, unconscious of itself as nature as the result of the repression of mimesis by its transformation into the *ratio*. The "original history of signification" conceived in the "Idea of Natural-History" becomes the "original history of subjectivity"[29] traced in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*.

At the same time that Adorno presents his basic model of history in the study of Heidegger, he also states the central problem of his philosophy: if the *ratio* consumes its relation to its object, produces a pseudo-objectivity, how

29. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 78.

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can thought justify its own process and continue to think? Or, in the terms that Adorno developed in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, if mimesis as a process of identification with the aggressor results in the repression of mimesis that knowledge to be knowledge requires, how is it possible to recuperate mimesis without simply retracing the dialectic of enlightenment? The answer that runs throughout Adorno's work is: by memory of nature in the subject. In the "Idea of Natural-History" this is formulated, in the second part, as the problem of perceiving transcience within meaning, as achieving the content of second nature; meaning is the ruins of nature: "When the world of convention approaches, it can be deciphered in that its meaning is shown to be precisely its transcience".

One of the obscure aspects of Adorno's essay is that he does not actually explain how this interpretation is to occur. He says only that Benjamin showed this perception of nature as history to be the form of allegory and indicates that this form is somehow related to the organization of constellations of concepts. How are allegory and constellations related? This can only be briefly answered here by pointing to a central aspect of Adorno's essay, already referred to. While Adorno cites Lukács and Benjamin as the origins of the idea of natural-history, the major characteristic of the essay is its Hegelian form, beginning with the initial intention to develop the internal mediation of nature and history. The Hegelian interest extends right into the presentation of the origins of the idea of natural-history in the second section. Adorno introduces Lukács as having conceived the transformation of history into nature. Yet Adorno did not have to introduce Lukács for this purpose; the thought is equally central to Benjamin's work. In a much later essay, in fact, Adorno wrote that Benjamin had the power to regard history as nature, "as scarcely another."[30] The decisive reason for Lukács in the essay is Adorno's interest in introducing the concept of "second nature," an Hegelian concept that does not occur as such in Benjamin's writings.[31] This concept allowed Adorno to set up a symetrical group of concepts of nature, history and second nature amenable to an Hegelian treatment. It would be possible to show that, in the Hegelian intention of this essay, Adorno was already at work at a critique of ontological elements in Benjamin's thought. Benjamin's study of the Baroque is a research of *origins,* which Adorno distantly criticizes. The problem of interpretation, he wrote, "can not simply be a matter of demonstrating that in history itself original-historical themes constantly turn up". Adorno overcame the ontological interest of Benjamin's work while maintaining the intention of allegory and constellative thought in the form of immanent critique, in the Hegelian movement of concepts freed from the claim to totality. It is this form of thought, evident in the first section of Adorno's essay, that Adorno made explicit in the *Dialectic of Enlightenment:* The concept "does not merely distance men from nature, but as the self-consideration of thought

30. Adorno, G.S., vol. 10.1, p. 242.

31. "Second nature" would, in Benjamin's terms, simply be the "natural historical" carrying a sense conflicting with Adorno's development of the term.

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. . . allows the distance which perpetuates injustice to be measured. By virtue of this remembrance of nature in the subject . . . enlightenment is universally opposed to domination."[32] This negative dialectic is the form in which the *ratio* may continue to be pursued, albeit transformed. The allegory of the *Odyssey* is interpreted according to this intention. Measuring the distance between what an object claims to be and is, between Ulysseus as what he presents himself, as the bearer of culture, and as second nature, gains the content of Ulysses' voyage: the repression of internal and external nature. At this point Adorno's dialectic converges again with Benjamin. For Benjamin the idea is to its phenomena as is an expression to a face; the idea is expressive. For Adorno, likewise, the idea is not the Hegelian totality, in which expression is sublated, rather it is perceived with *θαυμάζειν*. Here the Platonic shock, the ecstatic intuition of the idea, is that of the transformation of history into nature, the release of transcience. It is distinguished from the Platonic shock, however, in that it is the perception of a particular rather than of a universal.

Critique of Natural-History and the Recuperation of Mimesis

Memory of nature in the subject, then, is a critique of illusion: the illusion of what something claims to be in opposition to what it is. Philosophy, Adorno wrote, "has no other measure than the collapse of illusion (*Schein*)."[33] It is a process of opening up concepts whose content is "memory of suffering." Concepts have this content only because of the experience, the course of domination, that is layered in them. This determines the direction of philosophy. As Adorno wrote in the "Idea of Natural-History," concepts must be treated "as they occur in the language of philosophy", that is, according to their historical content, according to the nature that has passed away within them. As has already been seen, the term "natural-history" is not developed in this fashion in Adorno's essay. Yet the form of the term is not unallied with that of immanent criticism. In an essay on Hegel, Adorno treats identification with the aggressor as the core of Hegel's dialectic, the model of the ruse of reason; reminiscent of Ulysses' skill, it is "peasant cunning": "instructed so long to humble itself in front of the powerful and to dedicate itself to their needs till it succeeds in winning away power for itself."[34] This form can be traced into the most microscopic details of Hegel's work. In the *Philosophy of Nature*, in which spirit develops through every stage of its otherness, sound, a unity within the element of externality, is described as "the cry of the ideal under foriegn power, but withal its triumph over this power since it preserves itself therein."[35] Adorno reproduces this thought in his model of the name as "the gasp of surprise that accompanies the experience of the extraordinary. It fixes transcendence of the unknown in relation to the known."[36] The gasp of

32. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, p. 33.
33. Adorno, G.S., vol. 5, p. 47.
34. *Ibid.*, p. 286.
35. G.W.F. Hegel, *Werke* (Frankfurt, 1970), vol. 9, p. 174.
36. One of the most significant conflicts between Adorno and Benjamin is that for the latter the name is prior to the Fall; for Adorno, it is part of the Fall.

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surprise is mimesis of the object of terror. Overwhelmed, the self is nevertheless victorious. The name initiates the distinction of sign and image that is the origins of the explanation and control of nature.[37] Adorno is a critic of this ruse in so far as, in winning power for itself, the subject makes itself into a model of its former oppression. Yet while the name originates in the dialectic of enlightenment, the recovery of mimesis is in the name that is radical identification with the aggressor, thought that follows its objects to the point that "the inherent consequence of the objects is transformed into their own criticism;"[38] to the point, that is, that the object destroys its own illusion. By immanent critique the object names itself. This is rational mimesis, the recovery of the name from the course of domination. The form of Adorno's "Idea of Natural History," then, is the transformation of the regressive form of the term "natural-history."

Second Nature and the Recuperation of Illusion

Immanent critique, the critique of illusion, could not be the rejection of illusion. Its strength lies nowhere else: immanent critique breaks illusion by the strength of illusion, by the strength of the concept's claim to identity. Adorno's philosophy, in general, could be characterized as the dialectical reflection on the critique and recuperation of semblance, it is the reflection in which Adorno's negative dialectics and his sociological studies are joined with his aesthetic writings; it is this mediation that Adorno develops in the third section of his essay where these two aspects of his thought appear in their mutually implicating complexity. This section begins by developing the thought that is at the core of the historical study of part one and which, with the slightest modification, includes the central concepts of the *Dialectic of Enlightenment*: myth is explained to be not simply a static foundation; in it the new and the repetitive are mediated in one another. The historical is mythical and the mythical historical. Not only are they intertwined but the historically new appears as the mythical. This is apparent in the phenomenon of the semblance of second nature, a semblance because it is the mere appearance of meaning. Although it is historically produced, this semblance appears as mythical: as archaic, insistently expressive, an engulphing whirlpool.[39] The "Idea of Natural-History" begins to elucidate this phenomenon in order to open up the mythical, that is, in this case, to open up semblance. Yet this is not the undialectical rejection of semblance: "the definitive transcendent element of myth, reconciliation, also inheres in semblance". Adorno hardly explains himself: "I refer you to the structure of the original-historical in semblance itself, where semblance in its being-just-as-it-is (*Sosein*) proves itself to be historically produced". In other words: the element of reconciliation in semblance appears when its content of transcience is expressed, at the point where the archaic reveals itself as the historical. Second nature at this instant shows

37. *Dialectic of Enlightenment,* p. 15.
38. Adorno, *Philosophy of Modern Music,* trans. Mitchell and Blomster (New York, 1973), p. 27.
39. Adorno's description of the mythical character of second nature should be read as complementing Strauss' description of the historical moment.

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itself to be first nature, transcience. In Benjamin's terms, second nature reveals itself as a *facies hippocratica*.

Adorno is here developing the full content of the concept of second nature. In opposition to both Benjamin and Lukács, Adorno did not reify the critique of reification. In alliance with Hegel that spirit can only come to itself by way of its other, reification is not conceived as strictly negative. In art, myth becomes its opposite. The completion of convention, of meaninglessness, would be the release from the spell of false meaning. The obscurity of Adorno's brief passage is illuminated by innumerable others from his later work. To quote just one: "Art's truth appears guaranteed more by its denial of any meaning in organized society, of which it will have no part — accomplished by its own organized absence of meaning — than by any capability of positive meaning within itself."[40] By the complete control over the material, the completion of convention, the mythical becomes expressive, "passions are no longer simulated, but rather genuine emotions of the unconscious — of shock, of trauma — are registered without disguise through the medium of music."[41] Only by way of illusion is art able to destroy illusion. "The radicalism with which the technical work of art destroys aesthetic illusion makes illusion responsible for the technical work of art."[42]

Art is semblance that, by its completion, collapses semblance. The fundamental problem of art is that it is the critique of reification by way of reification. This thought was the basis of Adorno's polemic against engaged art: in spite of its dogged clear-headedness engaged art would actually return art to magic by attempting to strip off art's illusoriness.[43] Engaged art, which thinks it is opposed to abstractionism etc., fails to recognize its affinity with all modern art's attempt to do away with its semblance. For Adorno, the problem of aesthetics becomes the attempt to justify semblance. This is the content of his *Aesthetic Theory*. It is the justification of art, a justification of its semblance as a critique of semblance.

Second nature is not only convention, but a new nature. In his study of *Brave New World*, Adorno criticizes Huxley's disdain for Lenina, a robotic, test-tube creation, the quintessence of artificial charm, with whom the novel's protagonist falls in love. According to Adorno, Huxley misunderstood his creation: "Because she is at one with convention down to her very core, the tension between the conventional and the natural dissolves, and with it the violence in which the injustice of convention consists . . . Through total mediation . . . a new immediacy, a new humanity would arise."[44] Adorno has the same to say of Anton Webern's tonal invention: the purely artifical tone becomes a new natural tone.[45] Similarly, Ulysses's voyage, a work of artifice, is not only a course of regression. Even though artifice is shown to be "the

40. *Philosophy of Modern Music*, p. 42. Translation modified.
41. *Ibid.*, p. 39.
42. *Ibid.*, p. 70.
43. Adorno, G.S., vol. 7, pp. 154ff.
44. *Prisms*, pp. 105-106.
45. G.S., vol. 7, pp. 122ff.

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means by which the adventuring self loses itself in order to preserve itself,"[46] Adorno does not rigidify his concepts. Ulysses artifice is also seen to become its own opposite: After returning home Ulysses must again set out to appease Poseidon who was enraged with Ulysses for having blinded Polyphemos. Ulysseus is instructed to carry an oar inland until he meets someone who will mistake the oar for a winnowing fan. This will make the god laugh; in this laughter, wounded nature will give up its rage.[47] Adorno gives substantial importance to this section, which is not surprising. The oar that has been brought inland has shaken off its funtion. The artifice of self-preservation becomes pure artifice, related to art whose problem, Adorno writes, is "to make things of which we do not know what they are."[48] Similarly, the artificiality of Adorno's language — which irritates[49] because it at every point rejects the possibility of grasping the immediate as anything but the illusion of nature — is the completion of the ruse of immanent criticism, finally the model of a second nature.

46. *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, pp. 48-49.

47. This point is hard to get from the English version of hte *Dialectic of Enlightenment*, which translates the passage in question as "through laughter blind nature becomes aware of itself as it is, and thereby surrenders itself to the power of destruction" (p. 77). This should read: "through . . ., and thereby forgoes its destructive power."

48. G.S., vol. 7, p. 178.

49. To give one example from hundreds of the experience of this irritation, one that is of particular interest for its perception of nature: Adorno came "to the conclusion that neo-classicism was intrinsically reactionary, a theme that he was to pursue through the thickets of his prose for the next forty years." Peter Heyworth, *Otto Klemperer* (Cambridge, 1983), p. 263.

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THE IDEA OF NATURAL HISTORY

by Theodor W. Adorno

Allow me to preface my remarks today by saying that I am not going to give a lecture in the usual sense of communicating results or presenting a systematic statement. Rather, what I have to say will remain on the level of an essay; it is no more than an attempt to take up and further develop the problems of the so-called Frankfurt discussion.[1] I recognize that many uncomplimentary things have been said about this discussion, but I am equally aware that it approaches the problem correctly and that it would be wrong always to begin again at the beginning.

First permit me a few words on terminology. Although the topic is natural-history, it is not concerned with natural history in the traditional pre-scientific sense of the history of nature, nor with the history of nature where nature is the object of natural science. The concept of nature employed here has absolutely nothing to do with that of the mathematical sciences. I cannot develop in advance what nature and history will mean in the following context. However, I do not overstep myself if I say that the real intention here is to dialectically overcome the usual antithesis of nature and history. Therefore, wherever I operate with the concepts of nature and history, no ultimate definitions are meant, rather I am pursuing the intention of pushing these concepts to a point where they are mediated in their apparent difference. The concept of nature that is to be dissolved is one that, if I translated it into standard philosophical terminology, would come closest to the concept of myth. This concept is also vague and its exact sense can not be given in preliminary definitions but only in the course of analysis. By it is meant what has always been, what as fatefully arranged predetermined being underlies history and appears in history; it is substance in history. What is delimited by these expressions is what I mean here by "nature." The question that arises is that of the relationship of this nature to what we understand by history, where history means that mode of conduct established by tradition that is characterized primarily by the occurance of the qualitatively new; it is a movement that does not play itself out in mere identity, mere reproduction of what has always been, but rather one in which the new occurs; it is a movement that gains its true character through what appears in it as new.

I would like to develop what I call the idea of natural-history on the basis of an analysis, or more correctly, an overview of the question of ontology within the current debate. This requires beginnng with "the natural." For the ques-

*Translated by Bob Hullot-Kentor.

1. There are various opinions about this reference, none authoritative. Cf. W. Martin Luedeke, *Anmerkungen zu einer Logik des Zerfalls* (Frankfurt: Shurkamp, 1981), p. 74, and Hermann Moerschen, *Adorno und Heidegger* (Stuttgart: Klett, 1982), p. 34.

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tion of ontology, as it is formulated at present, is none other than what I mean by "nature." I will then begin at another point and attempt to develop the concept of natural history out of the problematic of the philosophy of history. In the course of discussion this concept will already substantially gain its content and concreteness. After the formulation of these two questions has been sketched out, I will attempt to articulate the concept of natural-history itself and analyze the elements by which it appears to be characterized.

I.

To consider, then, first of all, the problem of the present ontological situation: if you pursue the question of ontology as it has been formulated in the context of so-called phenomenology and indeed especially in the context of post-Husserlian phenomenology, that is, from Scheler on, one can conclude that its initial intention was to overcome the subjectivistic standpoint of philosophy. It meant to replace a philosophy that aims at the dissolution of all categories of being into categories of thought and that believes itself able to ground all objectivity in certain fundamental structures of subjectivity, by an approach that establishes another kind of being, a region of being that is different in principle, a transsubjective, an *ontic* region of being. And ontology is at issue so long as the logos is to be developed from this ὄν (being). It is, indeed, the fundamental paradox of all modern ontological thought that the means with which the attempt is made to establish transsubjective being is none other than the same subjective reason that had earlier erected the infrastructure of critical idealism.[2] Phenomenological-ontological thought presents itself as an attempt to secure transsubjective being by means of autonomous reason and its language since other means and another language are not available. Now, the ontological question of being can be articulated in two forms: In one form it is the question of *being itself*, what since Kant's first critique, as the thing in itself, has been pushed back beyond the reach of philosophical inquiry and then drawn back out again. At the same time, however, this question becomes that of the *meaning* of being, the meaningfulness of the existing *(Seiendes)* or of the meaning of being as, simply, possibility. It is precisely the double form of the question that argues powerfully for the thesis that I am propounding, that the ontological question with which we are today concerned, holds to the starting point of autonomous reason: only when reason perceives the reality that is in opposition to it as something foreign and lost to it, as a complex of things, that is, only when reality is no longer immediately accessible and reality and reason have no common meaning, only then can the question of the meaning of being be asked at all. The question of meaning is determined by the starting point of reason, but at the same time the question of the meaning of being, the axis of the early phases of phenomenology (Scheler), produces a broadly encompassing range of problems through its subjectivistic origin. For this production of meaning is none other than the insertion of subjective meanings as they have been posited by subjectivity.

2. Neo-Kantianism. Trans.

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The insight that the question of meaning is nothing more than the insertion of subjective meaning into the existing leads to the crisis of phenomenology's first stage. The drastic expression of this crisis is the obvious instability of fundamental ontological categories which reason has to experience in its attempt to secure an order of being. As it has been shown that the factors accepted as fundamental and meaningful, as for example in Scheler's work, stem from a different sphere and are in no way themselves possibilities within being, but have been derived from the existing and are indeed imbued with all the dubiousness of the existing, so the whole question of being becomes insoluable within phenomenology.[3] So far as the question of meaning can still occur, it does not imply the establishment of a sphere of significations isolated from the empirical that would be valid and always accessible; rather the question of meaning is really none other than the question τί ἦν ὸν, the question of what being itself properly *is*. The expressions: meaning and signification are ambiguous in these contexts. Meaning can be a transcendent content which, lying behind being and signified by it, can be developed by analysis. On the other hand, meaning can also be the interpretation of the existing itself with regard to what characterizes it as being, but without this interpreted being thereby having been proven meaningful. It is therefore possible to pose the question of the meaning of being as the signification of the *category* of being, as that which being really is, but that, in terms of the initial question, the existing will turn out to be not meaningful, but meaningless, as is increasingly the case today.

If this reversal of the question of being has occured, then the single initial intention of the original ontological reversal disappears, namely that of the turn towards the ahistorical. This was the case with Scheler's work, at least in his early work (which has remained the more influential), where he attempted to construct a heaven of ideas on the foundation of a purely rational intuition of non-historical and eternal contents, that rediates over and above everything empirical and has a normative character to which the empirical allows access. But, at the same time, there is a basic tension between the meaningful and essential that lies behind the historically manifested and the sphere of history itself. In the origins of phenomenology there is a dualism of nature and history. This dualism ("nature" in this context means that which is ahistorical, Platonically ontological), and the original intention of the ontological reversal that it embodies, has corrected itself. The question of being no longer has the significance of the Platonic question of the extent of the static and qualitatively different ideas that stand in contrast to the existing, the empirical, in a normative relationship or in a relationship of tension. Rather, the tension disappears; the existing itself becomes meaning and a grounding of being beyond history is replaced by a project (*Entwurf*) of being as historicity.

3. This was a general critique of Scheler current in the late 20s. One student put it: "Whatever happens in the real world . . . the assassination of a dictator, or the failure of such a plot . . . either can be explained by Scheler's sociology and metaphysics. His philosophy is adapted to account for any situation; like the barber's stool, as one of Shakespeare's fools says, it's designed for any ass." Quoted in J.R. Staude, *Max Scheler* (New York: Free Press, 1967), p. 239. Trans.

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This displaces the problem and for the moment, at least, the issues dividing ontology and historicism apparently disappear. From the perspective of history, of historical criticism, ontology seems to be either a merely formal framework that has nothing to say about the content of history and can be arbitrarily set up around the concrete, or, in the Schelerian form of material ontology, it appears as the arbitrary production of absolutes out of inner-historical facts which, perhaps for ideological purposes, are raised to the level of eternal and universal values. From the ontological point of view the problem is just the reverse and it is this antithesis that has dominated our Frankfurt discussions: according to the ontologists all radically historical thought, all thought that aims at reducing content exclusively to historical conditions, must presuppose a project of being by which history is already given as a structure of being; only within the framework of such a project is the historical organization of particular phenomena and contents in any way possible.

Now the most recent turn of phenomenology, if one may still call it that, has carried out a correction at this point by eliminating the pure antithesis of history and being. By on the one hand renouncing the Platonic heaven of ideas and on the other by, in observing being, regarding it as life, false stasis and formalism have been eliminated. For the project (Entwurf) appears to absorb the fullness of the elements of being and even the suspicion of the transformation of the accidental into the absolute disappears. History itself, in its most extreme agitation, has become the basic ontological structure. At the same time, historical thought itself appears to have undergone a fundamental reversal. It is reduced to a philosophically based structure of historicity as a fundamental quality of human existence *(Dasein)*. This structure is responsible for there being any history in the first place without, however, that which history *is* being set up in opposition to it as a finished, fixed, and foreign object. This is the point that the Frankfurt discussion has reached and where I may begin to introduce critical themes.

It appears to me that the starting point that we have arrived at here and that unifies the ontological and historical questions likewise fails to master the concrete issues or does so only by modifying its own logical and by incorporating at its content themes that do not necessarily derive from the outlined principle. I will demonstrate this with regard to just two points.

First of all, even this project is limited to general categories. The problem of historical contingency can not be mastered by the category of historicity. One can set up a general structural category of life, but if one tries to interpret a particular pehnomenon, for example the French Revolution, though one can indeed find in it every possible element of this structure of life, as for instance that the past returns and is taken up and one can verify the meaning of the spontaneity that originates in man, discover causal contexts, etc., it is nevertheless impossible to relate the facticity of the French Revolution in its most extreme factual being to such categories. On the contrary, in the full breadth of the material one will find a sphere of "facticity" that cannot be explained. This is of course not my own discovery, but has long since been demonstrated

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within the framework of ontological discussion. But it has not been previously enunciated so sharply, or rather, it has been worked over in an expedient fashion: all facticity that will not, on its own, fit into the ontological project is piled into one category, that of contingency, of the accidental, and this category is absorbed by the project as a determination of the historical. However logically consistent this may be, it also includes the admission that the attempt to master the empirical has misfired. At the same time this turn in the theory offers a schema for a new turn within the question of ontology. This is the turn towards tautology.

I mean nothing else than that the attempt of neo-ontological thought to come to terms with the unreachability of the empirical continually operates according to one schema: precisely where an element fails to dissolve into determinations of thought and cannot be made transparent, but rather retains its pure thereness, precisely at this point the resistance of the phenomenan is transformed into a universal concept and their resistance as such is endowed with ontological value. It is the same with Heidegger's concept of being-towards-death as well as with the concept of historicity itself. The structure of historicity, in the neo-ontological formulation of the problem, only offers an *apparent* solution to the problem of the reconciliation of nature and history. Even though history is acknowledged to be a fundamental phenomenon, its ontological determinations or ontological interpretation is in vain because it is transfigured directly into ontology. This is the case for Heidegger for whom history, understood as an all embracing structure of being, is equivalent to his own ontology. This is the basis of such feeble antitheses as that of history and historicity, which contain nothing but qualities of being that have been gleaned from human existence and transposed into the sphere of ontology by being substracted from the existing and transformed into ontological determinations, aids for the interpretation of that which is basically only being repeated. This element of tautology is not due to the coincidences of the linguistic form, rather it is necessarily embeded in the ontological question itself, which holds to ontological endeavour, but because of its rational starting point it is unable to ontologically interpret itself as what it is: namely, a produce of, and internally related to, the starting point of the idealist *ratio*. This requires explanation. If there is a path that leads farther, then it can in fact only be adumbrated by a "revision of the question." Of course this revision is not only to be applied to the problem of history, but also to the problem of neo-ontology itself. At least some indication may be given here why it appears to me that this problem stems from the fact that the idealist starting point has not been abandoned even by neo-ontological thought. Specifically: neo-ontology is characterized by two element that it owes to idealism.

The first is the definition of the encompassing whole *vis-à*-vis the particularities included in it; it is no longer held to be a systematic whole, but rather a structural whole, a structural unity or totality. In conceiving the possibility of encompassing all reality unambiguously, even if only in a structure, a claim is implicit that he who combines everything existing under this

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structure has the right and the power to know adequately the existing in itself and to absorb it into the form. The moment that this claim can no longer be made, it becomes impossible to talk about a structural whole. I know that the contents of the new ontology are quite different from what I have just asserted. The most recent turn in phenomenology, it would be said, is precisely not rationalistic, but rather an attempt to aduce the irrational element in a totally new way under the category of "life." It makes, however, an enormous difference whether irrational contents are inserted into a philosophy that is founded on the principle of autonomy, or if philosophy no longer assumes that reality is adequately accessible. I only need to point out that a philosophy like Schopenhauer's came to its irrationalism by no other way than strict adherence to the fundamental theme of rational idealism — the Fichtean transcendental subjectivity. To my mind this is evidence for the possibility of an idealism with irrational content.

The second element is the emphasis on possibility in contrast to reality. Actually it is this problem of the relationship of possibility and reality that is perceived as the greatest difficulty in the context of neo-ontological thought. I want to be careful here not to attribute positions to neo-ontology that are still being disputed within it. But it is consistently agreed that the project *(Entwurf)* of being at least takes priority over the subsumed facticity; a facticity that is to be fitted in as an afterthought and when it does not is subject to criticism. I find idealist elements in the predominance of the sphere of possibility, because in the context of the critique of pure reason the antithesis of possibility and reality is none other than that of the categorical subjective structure and empirical multiplicity. This relation of neo-ontology to the idealist position not only explains its formalism, the unavoidable generality of its categories, to which facticity can not conform, but it is also the key to the problem of tautology. Heidegger says that it is no mistake to move in a circle, the only concern is to enter it in the proper fashion. I am inclined to agree with him. But if philosophy is to remain true to its task, then entering the circle correctly can only mean that being which determines or interprets itself as being makes clear in the act of interpretation the element through which it interprets itself as such. The tautological tendency, as I see it, can only be clarified through the old idealist theme of identity. It has its origin in the subsumption of a being that is historical by the subjective category of historicity. The historical being that has been subsumed by the subjective category of historicity is supposed to be identical with history. Being is to conform to the categories with which historicity stamps it. The tautology appears to me to be less a self-grounding of the mythical depths of language than a new camouflage of the old classical thesis of the identity of subject and object. Heidegger's most recent turn towards Hegel seems to confirm this interpretation.

Given this revision of the problem, the starting point itself remains to be revised. We have established that the division of the world into nature and spirit or nature and history, a tradition set by subjectivistic idealism, must be overcome and that its place must be taken by a formulation that achieves in

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itself the concrete unity of nature and history. A *concrete* unity, however, is not one modeled on an antithesis of possible and real being, but a unity developed from the elements of real being itself. The neo-ontological project of history only has a chance of winning ontological dignity, of achieving an actual interpretation of being, if it is directed not at possibilities of being, but radially at the existing itself in its concrete inner-historical definition. Every exclusion of natural stasis from the historical dynamic leads to false absolutes, every isolation of the historical dynamic from the unsurpassably natural elements in it leads to false spiritualism. The achievement of the neo-ontological formulation is that it has radically demonstrated the insuperable interwovenness of natural and historical elements. On the other hand, this formulation of the problem must be purged of the idea of an all encompassing whole and it is necessary, furthermore, to criticize the separation of the real and possible from the point of view of reality, whereas they were previously quite disparate. These are in the first place general methodological requirements. But much more is to be postulated. If the question of the relation of nature and history is to be seriously posed, then it only offers any chance of solution if it is possible *to comprehend historical being in its most extreme historical determinacy, where it is most historical, as natural being, or if it were possible to comprehend nature as an historical being where it seems to rest most deeply in itself as nature.* It is no longer simply a matter of conceptualizing the fact of history as a natural fact *toto caelo* (inclusively) under the category of historicity, but rather to retransform the structure of inner-historical events into a structure of natural events. No being underlying or residing within historical being itself is to be understood as ontological, that is, as natural being. The retransformation of concrete history into dialectical nature is the task of the ontological reorientation of the philosophy of history: the idea of natural-history.

II.

I go back now to the question of the philosophy of history that has already lead to the construction of the concept of natural-history. The concept did not fall from heaven. Rather it has its binding identity in the context of historico-philosophical work on particular material, till now above all on aesthetic material. The simplest way to give an idea of this type of historical conception of nature is to cite the sources in which the concept of natural-history originates. I am referring to the works of Georg Lukács and Walter Benjamin. In the *Theory of the Novel,* Lukács applied a concept that leads in this direction, that of a second nature. The framework of the concept of second nature, as Lukács uses it, is modeled on a general historico-philosophical image of a meaningful and a meaningless world (an immediate world and an alienated world of commodities) and he attempts to present this alienated world. He calls this world of things created by man, yet lost to him, the world of convention. "Where no aims are immediately given, the structures that the spirit in the process of becoming human finds amongst men as the scene and substrate of its activity lose their evident enrootedness in supra-personal ideal necessities; they are simply existent, perhaps powerful, perhaps frail, but they neither carry the

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consecration of the absolute nor are they the natural containers for the overflowing inwardness of the world. They form the world of convention, a world from whose all-embracing power only the innermost recesses of the soul are safe; a world that is present everywhere in boundless multiplicity and whose strict lawfulness, both in becoming and in being, is necessarily evident to the cognizant subject. But for all its lawfulness this world supplies neither a meaning for the subject in search of a goal nor sensuous immediacy as material for the acting subject. This world is a second nature; like the first — "first nature" for Lukacs is likewise alienated nature, nature in the sense of the natural sciences — "it can only be defined as the embodiment of well-known yet meaningless necessities and therefore it is ungraspable and unknowable in its actual substance."[4] This fact of a world of convention as it is historically produced, this world of estranged things that cannot be decoded but encounters us as ciphers, is the starting point of the question with which I am concerned here. From the perspective of the philosophy of history the problem of natural history presents itself in the first place as the question of how it is possible to know and interpret this alienated, reified, dead world. Lukacs already perceived this problem as foreign to us and a puzzle to us. If I should succeed at giving you a notion of the idea of natural-history you would first of all have to experience something of the θαυμάζειν (shock) that this question portends. Natural-history is not a synthesis of natural and historical methods, but a change of perspective. The passage in which Lukács comes closest to this conception, runs as follows: "The second nature of human constructs has no lyrical substantiality, its forms are too rigid to adapt themselves to the symbol creating moment; the content of its laws is far too rigidly defined ever to free itself from those elements that in lyric poetry must give rise to essayistic impulses; these impulses, indeed, live so exclusively by the grace of laws and have in fact so little valency of sensual existence independent of them, that without them they would collapse into nothing. This nature is not mute, corporeal and foreign to the senses like first nature: it is a petrified estranged complex of meaning that is no longer able to awaken inwardness; it is a charnel-house of rotted interiorities. This second nature could only be brought back to life, if ever, by a metaphysical act of reawakening the spiritual element that created or maintained it in its earlier or ideal existence, but could never be experienced by another interiority."[5]

The problem of this awakening, which Lukács grants to be a metaphysical possibility, is the problem that determines what is here understood by natural-history. Lukács envisioned the metamorphosis of the historical qua past into nature; petrified history is nature, or the petrified life of nature is a mere product of historical development. The reference to the charnel-house includes the element of the cipher: everything must mean something, just what, however, must first be extracted. Lukács can only think of this charnel-house in terms of a theological resurrection, in an eschatological context.

4. George Lukács, *The Theory of the Novel*, trans. Anna Bostock (Cambridge: MIT, 1978), p. 62. Translation corrected.

5. Lukács, *ibid.*, p. 54.

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Benjamin marks the decisive turning-point in the formulation of the problem of natural-history in that he brought the resurrection of second nature out of infinite distance into infinite closeness and made it an object of philosophical interpretation. Philosophy has succeeded in refining the concept of natural-history by taking up this theme of the awakening of enciphered and petrified object. Two passages from Benjamin's *The Origin of the German Play of Lamentation*[6] are germane to those quoted above from Lukacs. "In nature the allegorical poets saw eternal transience, and here alone did the saturnine vision of these generations recognize history."[7] "When, as is the case in the German play of lamentation, history comes onto the scene, it does so as a cipher to be read. "History" is writ across the countenance of nature in the sign language of transience."[8] The deepest point where history and nature converge lies precisely in this element of transience. If Lukacs demonstrates the retransformation of the historical, as that which has been, into nature, then here is the other side of the phenomenon: nature itself is seen as transitory nature, as history.

The problem of natural history can not be correctly formulated in terms of general structures, but only as interpretations of concrete history. Benjamin shows that allegory is no composite of merely adventitious elements; the allegorical is not an accidental sign for an underlying content. Rather there is a specific relation between allegory and the allegorically meant, "allegory is expression." Allegory is usually taken to mean the presentation of a concept as an image and therefore it is labelled abstract and accidental. The relationship of allegory to its meaning is not accidental signification, but the playing out of a particularity; it is expression. What is expressed in the allegorical sphere is nothing but an historical relationship. The theme of the allegorical is, simply, history. At issue is an historical relationship between what appears — nature — and its meaning, i.e. transience. This is explained as follows: "[The worldly, historical breadth . . . of the allegorical intention is, as natural history, as the original history of signification or of intention, dialectical in character.[9]] The

6. Since Benjamin's book is altogether concerned with distinguishing Baroque theater and the form of its lamentation from tragedy, a worse translation of its title than the one it presently carries, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, could not have been found. Trans.

7. Walter Benjamin, *The Origin of German Tragic Drama*, trans. John Osborne (London: NLR Press, 1977), p. 179. Translation corrected.

8. *Ibid.*, p. 177. Translation corrected.

9. This line precedes the passage that Adorno actually quotes. It does not appear in either the published or in Adorno's manuscript. From the context, however, it is clearly required. The editor of Adorno's collected works agrees and it will be inserted in future editions (letter from Tiedemann). It is interesting to speculate why this line is missing. Tiedemann guesses that the essay was delivered from notes. The single manuscript that exists would be the work of a stenographer who could have easily missed a line. Unfortunately, it has not been possible to check whether a stenographer was at this meeting for, according to the present editor of *Kant-Studien*, all of the Society's records from the period were destroyed (letter from Manfred Kleinschneider). One thing, however, makes it doubtful that the essay is solely the work of a stenographer and that is its footnotes. Only Adorno could have plausibly put in footnote 16. He must have gone over the essay, perhaps preparing it for publication, and this makes the fact important that Adorno, not known for carelessness, passed over the passage's discontinuity. An explanation is possible: The line contains two important elements, one a reference to the "original-history of signification" and the other to natural history, in Benjamin's sense of course. The former was

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relationship of symbol and allegory may be incisively and formally determined by means of the decisive category of time, whose introduction into this sphere of semiotics was the great romantic insight of these thinkers. Whereas in the symbol, with the glorification of death and destruction, the transfigured face of nature reveals itself fleetingly in the light of redemption, in allegory the observer is confronted with the *facies hippocratica*[10] of history, a petrified primordial landscape. Everything about history that, from the beginning, has been untimately, sorrowful, unsuccessful, is expressed in a face — or rather in a death's head. And although such a thing lacks all "symbolic" freedom of expression, all classical proportion, all that is human, nevertheless not only the nature of human existence in general but the biographical historicity of an individual is enunciated in this figure of the most extreme subjugation to nature, in the form of a riddle. This is the heart of the allegorical vision, of the Baroque, secular exposition of history as the passion of the world; it is only meaningful in the stations of its prostration. The greater the signification, the greater the subjugation to death, for death digs most deeply the jagged demarcation line between *physis* and signification."[11] What is the meaning here of "transience" and "original-history of signification?"[12] I cannot develop these concepts in a traditional fashion. What is at issue is of an essentially different logical form from that of a scheme of thought based on a project (Entwurf) whose foundation is constituted by a general conceptual structure. The alternative logical structure cannot be analyzed here. This structure is a constellation. It is not a matter of clarifying concepts out of one another, but of the constellation of ideas, namely those of transience, signification, the idea of nature and the idea of history. One does not refer back to these ideas as "invariants;" the issue is not to define them, rather they gather around a concrete historical facticity that, in the context of these elements, will reveal itself in its uniqueness. How do these elements cohere? According to Benjamin, nature, as creation, carries the mark of transience. Nature itself is transitory. Thus it includes the element of history. Whenever an historical element appears it refers back to the natural element that passes away within it. Likewise the reverse: whenever "second nature" appears, when the world of convention approaches, it can be deciphered in that its meaning is shown to be precisely its transience. As Benjamin has understood this — and here the discussion must be pushed farther — there are certain fundamental original-historical

needed for the coherence of Adorno's talk. But in that, for Benjamin, it is given as a synonym for natural history, the reference would have confused the presentation. Trans.

10. This is not one of those Latin phrases that everyone is supposed to know. The "Hippocratic face" is the physiognomy of a person suffering from "the worst." Francis Adams, in his introduction to *The Genuine Works of Hippocrates* (N.Y.: William Wood, 1886), p. 195, cites the classical description of this countenance: "a sharp nose, hollow eyes, collapsed temples, the ears cold, contracted, and their lobes turned out: the skin about the forehead being rough, distended, and parched; the color of the whole face being green, black, livid, or lead colored." For a discussion of "the face of nature" in Greek, Hebrew and early modern traditions see H.A. Wolfson, *The Philosophy of Spinoza* (Cambridge: Harvard, 1962), Vol. 1, pp. 244-247. Trans.

11. Benjamin, *op. cit.*, p. 166. Translation corrected.

12. Literally, the last part of this sentence reads, "in both cases "transience" and "transitoriness" occur." In fact, only the word "transience" appears in the cited passages. Nothing of importance seems to be at stake and so the phrase has been dropped to avoid confusion. Trans.

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phenomena, which were originally present, have passed away and are signified in allegory, return in the allegorical, return as script. It cannot simply be a matter of demonstrating that in history itself original-history as transience contains within itself the theme of history. The basic quality of the transience of the earthly signifies nothing but just such a relationship between nature and history: all being or everything existing is to be grasped as the interweaving of historical and natural being. As transience all original-history is absolutely present. It is present in the form of "signification." "Signification" means that the elements of nature and history are not fused with each other, rather they break apart and interweave at the same time in such a fashion that the natural appears as a sign for history and history, where it seems to be most historical, appears as a sign for nature. All being, or at least all being that has been or become what it is, transforms itself into allegory; in these terms allegory is no longer merely a category of art history. Likewise "signification" itself is transformed from a problem of the hermeneutics of the philosophy of history, from a problem of transcendental meaning, into the element whose character it is to transsubstantiate history into original-history. Hence "original-history of signification." So, for example, in the language of the Baroque, the fall of a tyrant is equivalent to the setting of the sun. This allegorical relationship already encompasses the presentiment of a procedure that could succeed in interpreting concrete history as nature and to make nature dealectical under the aspect of history. The realization of this conception is once more the idea of natural-history.

III.

Having sketched out the origin of the idea of natural-history, I would like to carry the discussion farther. The positions of Lukáks, Benjamin and the idea of natural-history are related in the problem of the image of the charnel house. For Lukács it is something simply puzzling; for Benjamin is a cipher to be read. For radical natural-historical thought, however, everything existing transforms itself into ruins and fragments, into just such a charnel-house where signification is discovered, in which nature and history interweave and the philosophy of history is assigned the task of their intentional interpretation. A double turn, therefore, is made: on one hand I have reduced the ontological problematic to an historical formula and tried to show in what way ontology is to be concretely and historically radicalized. On the other hand, I have shown, under the aspect of transience, how history itself in a sense presses towards an ontological turn. What I mean here by ontological turn is something entirely different from that which is presently understood by the term.[13] Therefore I will not try to appropriate the expression for my own purposes, but will introduce it dialectically. What I have in mind with the idea of natural-history is not "historical ontology," not an attempt to isolate a group

13. Although Heidegger does not use the term "ontological turn" (*ontologische Wendung*), in the context of his work it would refer to a transformation of ontology such as occured with Descartes. Trans.

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of historical elements and to hypostatize them ontologically, force them, as for example Dilthey did, to encompass the totality of an epoch as its sense or fundamental structure. Dilthey's attempt at an historical ontology ran aground because he did not engage facticity with sufficient seriousness; he remained in the sphere of intellectual history and in the fashion of vague categories of styles of thought entirely failed to grasp material reality. Instead of intellectual history, instead of trying to reconstruct basic images of history epoch by epoch, the issue is to grasp historical facticity in its historicity itself as natural-historical.

To articulate the idea of natural-history I will take up a second problem from the opposite side. (This is a direct continuation of the Frankfurt discussion.) One might object that I am proposing a sort of bewitchment of history and passing off the historical, in all its contingency, as the natural and the original-historical. The historical is to be transfigured as something meaningful because it appears allegorical. That is, however, not what I mean. Certainly the starting point of the problem's formulation, the natural character of history is disconcerting. But if philosophy wanted to be nothing more than the shock that the historical presents itself at the same time as nature, then such a philosophy would be subject to Hegel's criticism of Schelling's philosophy as the night of indifferentiation in which all cats are grey. How does one avoid this night? That is something that I would like to clarify.

The starting point here is that history, as it lies before us, presents itself as thoroughly discontinuous, not only in that it contains disparate circumstances and facts, but also because it contains structural disparities. If Riezler[14] enumerates three opposing yet interrelated categories of historicity (i.e., *tyche, ananke*, spontaneity), I myself would not attempt to synthesize this division of the structure of history into a so-called unity. I believe, indeed, that the neo-ontologists have performed something very fruitful in their conception of this structure. Now this discontinuity, which, as I said, can not be legitimately transformed into a structural whole, presents itself in the first place as one between the mythical archaic, natural material of history, of what has been, and that which surfaces as dialectically and emphatically new. The problematical character of these categories is clear to me. The differential procedure required to arrive at natural-history without anticipating it as a unity consists in firstly accepting these two problematical and indeterminate structures in their contradictoriness, as they occur in the language of philosophy. This is legitimate in that it appears that the philosophy of history increasingly comes to just this sort of intertwining of the originally existing and the newly becoming in the findings presented by research. I would like to recall that psychoanalytic research presents this antithesis with full clarity in the distinction between archaic symbols, to which no associations may attach themselves, and inter-

14. Kurt Riezler, 1882-1955. Nationalist, classicist, philosopher. Once well known for his study of Parmenides and an aesthetics, more recently for his World War One diaries. Adorno is referring to his *Gestalt und Gesetz* (1924) a "critical metaphysics" that argues that life is characterized by a fundamental dualism of law and form, unified by fate. Cf. Introduction, note 11. Trans.

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subjective, dynamic, inner-historical symbols, which can all be eliminated and transformed into psychical actuality and present knowledge. Now the first task of the philosophy of history is to distinguish these two elements, separate them and set them out in mutual opposition. Only where this antithesis is made explicit is there a chance of succeeding in the complete construction of natural-history. Pragmatic findings, which turn up when one observes the archaic-mythical and the historical-new, indicate the direction of this process. It is evident that the foundation, the mythic-archaic, the supposedly substantial and enduring mythic, is in no way a static foundation. Rather, there is an element of the historically dynamic, whose form is dialectical, in all great myths as well as in the mythical images that our consciousness still carries. The mythic fundamental elements are in themselves contradictory and move in a contradictory manner (recall the phenomenon of the ambivalence, the "antithetical sense" of primal words).[15] The myth of Kronos is just such a myth in which the most extreme godly power of creation is coupled with the fact that he is the god who annihilates his creations, his children. Likewise, the mythology that underlies tragedy is in every instance dialectical because it includes the subjugation of the guilty man to nature at the same time that it develops out of itself the reconciliation of this fate: man raises himself up out of his fate as man. The dialectical element here is that the tragic myths contain at one and the same time subjectation to guilt and nature and the element of reconciliation that transcends the realm of nature. The notion not only of a static undialectical world of ideas, but of undialectical myths that break off the dialectic, points back to its origins in Plato.[16] In Plato the world of appearances lies fallow; it is abandoned, yet visibly ruled by the ideas. Yet the ideas take no part in the world of appearances and since they do not participate in the movement of the world, as a result of the alienation of the ideas from the world of human experience, they are necessarily transferred to the starts in order to be able to maintain themselves in the face of the world's dynamic. The ideas become static: frozen. This is, however, already the expression for a level of consciousness in which consciousness has lost its natural substance as immediacy. In Plato's moment consciousness has already succumbed to the temptation of idealism: spirit, banned from the world, alienated from history, becomes the absolute at the cost of life. The misconception of the static character of mythical elements is what we must free ourselves from if we want to arrive at a concrete representation of natural-history.

On the other hand, "the new," the dialectically produced, actually presents itself in history as the archaic. History is "most mythical where it is most historical." This poses the greatest problems. Rather than pursuing the thought in general terms, I will give an example, that of semblance (*Schein*) — and I mean semblance in the previously established sense of second nature. This

15. Apparently a reference to Freud's "The Antithetical Sense of Primal Words" (1910), in *Collected Papers*, 4th ed. by Joan Riviere (London: 1950). Trans.

16. Cf. Soren Kierkegaard, *The Concept of Irony*, trans. Lee M. Capel (Bloomington: Indiana, 1965), p. 112 ff.

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second nature is a nature of semblance in that it presents itself as meaningful and its semblance is historically produced. Second nature is illusory because we have lost reality yet we believe that we are able to meaningfully understand it in its eviscerated state, or because we insert subjective intention as signification into this foreign reality, as occurs in allegory. Now what is remarkable is that the inner-historical essence is itself semblance of a mythical kind. Just as the element of semblance is an aspect of every myth, indeed just as the dialectic of mythical fate is in every instance inaugurated by semblance in the forms of hubris and blindness, so the historically produced elements of semblance are always mythical. This is so not only in that they reach back to the archaic original-historical and that in art every illusory element has to do with myth (one thinks of Wagner), but rather because the mythical character itself returns in the historical phenomenon of semblance. Its clarification would be an authentic problem of natural-history. This would involve demonstrating, for example, that if you sense an aspect of semblance in certain houses, then along with this semblance there is the thought of that-which-has-always-been and that it is only being recognized. The phenomenon of deja-vu, of recognition, is to be analyzed at this point. The mythical model of anxiety returns vis-a-vis such inner-historical alienated semblance. An archaic anxiety descends everywhere that the illusory world of convention appears in front of us. The element of foreboding is also an aspect of this semblance; one of its mythical elements is to have the character of drawing everything into itself as into a funnel. The element of the actuality of semblance in contrast to its simple pictorialness, that we perceive semblance as expression everywhere that we come up against it, that it can not be sloughed off as merely illusory but expresses something that can not be described independently of its semblance — this is also a mythical element of semblance. To make a final point: the definitive transcendent element of myth, reconciliation, also inheres in semblance. It is worth remembering that emotion always accompanies the lesser, not the greatest art works. I am referring to that element of reconciliation that is present wherever the world appears most as semblance: the promise of reconciliation is most perfectly given where at the same time the world is most firmly immured from all "meaning." With this I refer you to the structure of the original-historical in semblance itself, where semblance in its being-just-as-it-is (*Sosein*) proves itself to be historically produced, or, in traditional philosophical terms, where semblance is the product of the subject/object dialectic. Second nature is, in truth, first nature. The historical dialectic is not simply a renewed interest in reinterpreted historical materials, rather the historical materials transform themselves into the mythical and natural-historical.

I wanted to speak about the relationship of these matters to historical materialism, but I only have time to say the following: it is not a question of completing one theory by another, but of the immanent interpretation of a theory. I submit myself, so to speak, to the authority of the materialist dialectic. It could be demonstrated that what has been said here is only an interpretation of certain fundamental elements of the materialist dialectic.

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THE REAGAN "REVOLUTION": 1978-1981, R.I.P.

by Fred Seigel

Policy Review, the organ of the conservative Heritage Foundation, devoted their winter 1984 issue to lamenting the failures of the Reagan administration. Publisher M. Stanton Evans complained that "This has been essentially another Ford Administration, . . . not much different from any other Republican administration in our lifetime. While the other Senator from Colorado, arch-conservative William Armstrong noted that Reagan had 'managed to polarize the country over budget cuts that didn't happen." "He cut the budget," bemoaned Armstrong, "enough to make the special interests and the press mad, but not enough" to restructure the government. For his part, National Conservative Political Action Committee (NCPAC) chair Terry Donlan has complained of the administration failure to move on its social agenda. Abortion remains legal, school prayer illegal. In sum Evans concluded, "There has been no Reagan Revolution."

It would be a mistake to dismiss these comments as mere grousing. In fact, despite the social program cuts which have punished the poor, the Reagan administration has accomplished curiously little of its original agenda. In retrospect we can see that the shift to conservative policies took place largely before Reagan took office, climaxed in the summer of 1981, and have been on hold ever since.

For a moment let us look back to the defeat of Gerald Ford, which was at the time mistakenly taken as a signal of conservative weakness. The 1980 collapse of the Democratic Party was foreshadowed in its pyric 1976 presidential victory. The Democrats, relatively unified, faced a shattered Republican party burdened by the greatest political scandal in American history and a badly slumping economy. The Republican candidate, Gerald Ford, troubled by the Reaganite insurgency within his own party, was so dull that as Walter Goodman has put it, "He was a figure destined to afflict schoolchildren yet unborn with the problem of whether it was he or Martin Van Buren who started the French and Indian Wars." Yet the Democrats barely managed to eke out a victory and then only because their candidate was a Southerner who had mastered the art of straddling. It was a measure of just how conservative politics had become that out on the stump the compaign themes of both parties were — God, major tax reductions, a balanced budget and a strong defense at the expense of social programs if need be — anticipated Reaganism.

Carter's victory, which seemed to mark the recrudescense of class-based New Deal Voting patterns, gave off a tubercular glow. There was no winning coalition, merely an aggregation of groups, some of them increasingly conservative, unwilling to vote for Ford and the Republicans. The forty-six freshman who came in with Carter were, including the Democrats, "more conservative on social and economic issues than any other [entering] class." The Democrats among them were fiercely independent, open ambassadors from suburban kingdoms who neither owed Carter their allegiance (he ran behind 272 of the 292 Democrats elected to the House) nor shared common goals. The product of the same wave of middle class reforms that had denuded the party organization and made Carter's consensus-less nomination possible, they were generally representatives of the burgeoning power of suburban and Sunbelt constituencies.

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With the National Democratic Party in a shambles and Congress reduced to a collection of independent princes, it was left to Jimmy Carter to try to forge a working alliance between the disparate groups who had rejected Ford. Even if the economy had not continued to falter it would have been an impossible task. Sensitive to the growing conservative mood in the country, Carter was caught between the growing demands of increasingly activist constituencies ranging from farmers to feminists, and the declining social surplus which had fueled all the Keynsian based Democratic reforms from the 1940s onward. He tried to reconcile the tension with Rafshoonery and phraseology. "Waste and inefficiency," he intoned, "never fed a hungry child." But what Carter confronted was not only the end of post-war growth but the limits of liberal social reform as well.

The strength of conservative sentiment became fully apparent by 1978, the year of California's Proposition 13 tax revolt. This was the year in which domestic social spending hit the peak, from which it continues to decline. The drubbing liberal politicians received in the '78 off-year elections were anticipated by the polls which showed a sharp and continuing decline in self-identified liberals. Jimmy Carter read the election returns and began to repeatedly clash with his HEW secretary Joe Califano over federal funding for abortion. Pressed, Carter told Califano "Well, as you know, there are many things in life that are not fair . . . I don't believe that the federal government should try to make these opporunities equal . . ." Califano, Marshal Frady tells us, professed astonishment. But the fact is, "Carter in more attitudes than one — his posturing against big government, his increasingly constricting preoccupation with inflation — was himself an early part of the political reaction that would elect RR."

Frady didn't know the half of it. Almost all the "innovations" of Reagan's celebrated 1981 tax bill were foreshadowed in the 1978 Revenue act proposed by Carter and passed by a Democratic Congress. The act turned away from earlier legislation by skewing tax reductions toward the upper income brackets and by seeking to spur investment through major reductions in business and capital gains taxation. The mood was so much in line with what came to be called supply side economics that one prominent administration supply sider, now a columnist for *The Wall Street Journal*, argued that the high water mark in supply side thinking may have come in 1979 when the Joint Economics Committee which embraced figures ranging from Kennedy and McGovern to strong conservatives like Clarence "Bud" Brown, released a unanimous report recommending even more emphasis on tax cuts and business incentives to stir investment.

Carter was almost a helpless bystander in all this, boomeranged by the issues that had brought him to power. Where once as Governor he had agitated over busing he was now being singed by the fires he had stoked. Watergate, though a short term boon, had in the long run only fueled the fires of discontent with a government which seemed alternatively a rogue elephant wandering loose across the countryside and a passive by-stander to the great events affecting the country. On matters of grave national importance like oil and OPEC Carter's administration turned in circles like the proverbial giant ship whose rudder was stuck. But however feeble it was in dealing with the sheiks, it managed to have the energy necessary to threaten Iowa's enormously popular six-women basketball teams with the possibility of a sex discrimination suit, thereby undercutting both itself and womens rights. The result was a sharp drop in the already low popular estimate of '60s type programs. As political scientist Kathleen Frankovic points out, between January of '78 and November of '80 the percentage describing '60s programs as having made things worse jumped from 14 to 20 percent so

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that fully 62% of those surveyed thought that the programs had either had no effect or made things worse. Only thirty percent of all races thought they had made things better.

It was Hubert Humphrey and not George Wallace who warned Carter that there had been a total breakdown of the bureaucracy. "The federal regional offices," he told the President, "are zilch." "The best thing to do would be to get rid of all these people." And it was Secretary of HEW Joe Califano, a self-described bureaucratic child of the '60s, who sounded like a neo-conservative when he complained how: "Intricate federal regulations . . . encourage even lengthier and more specific rules as state, local and private institutions scramble to comply . . . People trying to help each other feel suffocated, frustrated . . . as their freedom to act on matters they face each day is increasingly circumscribed." Stuart Eizenstadt, Carter's chief domestic advisor was as troubled as Califano. Most public contact with government, he said, came through the post office, Social Security, and the IRS, "If these agencies foul up, it has grave and widespread public repercussions." And, he concluded sadly, foul up they did. If key liberals felt this way, is it any wonder that Reagan was able to convince so many of his listeners that if they looked down their gun sights they would see all domestic problems along a single line, labeled big government.

The all too obvious contrast between the good life in official Washington and the decay of older cities and suburbs made it all the easier for Reagan's 1980 presidential campaign to appeal to the worst instincts of the work-a-day citizen paying for all the Capital froth and folly. Taxes, as Bob Kutner and others have noted, have become increasingly regressive. The gradual elimination of the corporate income tax, ever burgeoning Social Security taxes, the huge mortgage reductions of the wealthy and the growth of sales taxes shifted the burden of government revenue raising onto the backs of salaried and often union workers unable to dodge the tax code. It was middle income earners like the UAW tax revolters in Flint, Michigan who through the effects of bracket creep, were being asked by the Democratic Congress to finance a government they felt to be increasingly remote from their interests and unable or unwilling to come to grips with the inflation that was taking money from their pockets. The Republicans played on the widespread anger over taxes like a violin section and it's no wonder that throughout the country, but particularly in the Northeast, Reagan's gains over Ford came from middle income families with salaries between 15 and 24 thousand dollars a year.

Since the 1930s shrewd conservatives have dreamed of uniting social and economic conservatives under one tent. They failed, in part because of religious and ethnic divisions, the sticks and the slums, Protestants and Catholics. But as these older antipathies subsided and racial justice became the storm center of American politics, a hitherto impossible unity was achieved in the common response of Main Street and street corner conservatives to black advances and the government power behind those advances. It was Reagan's political genius to take advantage of that new unity to piggyback a program of obeisance to business on to the often racially based social issues which agitated conservatives of all stripes. As new right leader Paul Weyrich put it bluntly, "We talk about issues that people care about, like gun control, abortion, taxes and crime. Yes they're emotional issues, but that's better than talking about capital formation."

If Carter had been re-elected, he would have moved in a Reaganite direction. Carter's *Presidential Commission Report on a National Agenda for the 80s,* little noticed in the election year hubub, sharply criticized social programs for interfering with the natural mobility of labor. It proposed to break with past effort at aiding the distressed North-

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ern cities and instead encouraged training programs which would prepare inner city residents for a new life in the Sunbelt. Back in office, Carter planned major tax cuts for 1981. This, in part, was of course, a response to the inflation driven bracket creep which drove middle income earners into brackets designed for the wealthy. The Reagan tax proposals, as it turned out, were different in degree, not kind. The new administration's tax initiative was path breaking only in that it included indexing of taxes to adjust for inflation. If the tax cuts were half of what the press described as the "Reagan Revolution" the other half was Reagan's first budget.

"We are interested," said Reagan budget director David Stockman "in curtailing weak claims rather than weak clients." "The fear of the liberal remanant," he said "is that we will only attack weak clients. We have to show that we are willing to attack powerful clients with weak claims (on government). I think that's critical to our success — both political and economic success." Stockman was right, but what went unnoticed in the midst of all the talk about vast changes Reagan had wrought was that in the end Reagan had failed Stockman's test. The first Reagan budget was a Christmas tree loaded with goodies for most of the business interests that had backed the president. Because it gave away so much, Stockman sadly concluded that the Reagan budget victory "has slowed down the momentum but hasn't stopped what you would call the excessive growth of the budget." This was to haunt Reagan in 1983 and 84 when Washington became preoccupied with ballooning budget deficits. Stockman was despairing. "I have a new theory," he said," — there are no real conservatives in Congress."

Both the proposed Carter and the adopted Reagan budgets partook of the bipartisan consensus which had emerged since 1978. It said that inflation was more important than unemployment, economic growth more important than social redistribution, monetary policy more important than fiscal policy and markets more valuable than governments in promoting social reform.

Regan won some famous victories, the new tax bill and budget had been passed with unprecedented goodies for the rich. But the dimensions of the victory were exaggerated both by liberals looking for something to campaign against and conservatives looking to tout the president's achievements. The Reagan Revolution was over almost as soon as it began. Having played its own version of interest group politics, the administration was left without any idea of where to go next. By the fall of 1981 columnist Joseph Kraft spoke of the loss of intellectual bearings within the White House. Similarly forebodings came from prominent conservatives William Safire, Richar Whalen, and George Will. In various ways they pointed out that governments budget giveaways produced a large deficit which in turn generated high interest rates. This meant, true to Republican tradition, that Main St., dependent as always on cheap money was to be sacrificed to Wall St. Reagan's budget, they noted, violated the trust of working and middle class people who were willing to share in sacrificing for the common good, but expected the wealthy to sacrifice as well.

Herbert Stein, the orthodox Republican critic of Reaganomics put it differently. The Roosevelt Revolution, he said, was incorporated in statutes, programs and agencies that were not subject to annual reconsideration and that developed constituencies — bureaucracies and beneficiaries — that resisted counter-revolution. The Reagan changes were changes in numbers, mainly budget numbers that are the subject of redetermination every year. They would not have the lasting effect of Roosevelt's programs.

After more than three years of Reaganite political ascendency most Americans hold

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the same paradoxical position as they did in 1980. They are ideologically conservative and operationally liberal. Large majorities support strict government regulation of the environment, more federal help for the poor, more money for education, and limits on military spending. "History will record," said an official from the Office of Management and the Budget (OMB) "that the first Reagan administration stopped the jugernaut of federal spending." It will also record that Reagan demonstrated the floor beneath which governmental spending as a share of the GNP can not go. "Indeed," argues James Fallows, "the behavior of both parties indicates that we have come to an historic accord on the dimensions of the modern welfare/national security state."

The welfare state, that bastard offspring of a sentimentally socialist mother and a practicing capitalist father, has been under fierce attack from both left and right for two decades. Philosophically vulnerable to criticism from any integrated viewpoint with ethical content, it is an affront to both American individualism and socialist equity; devoid of charm and alure, a source of endless bureaucratic abuse, its logical inadequacy has been proved time and again to no avail. Buried in countless radical tracts it survives and even thrives, a sturdy transplant on these individualist shores because it satisfies the competing demands of freedom and communal obligation for the vast majority of the population.

ANXIETY AND POLITICS: NEO-CONSERVATISM AND CRITICAL THEORY

by Alfons Söllner

In all major Western countries except France and Spain, conservative governments have come to power by proposing policies opposed to the interests of the majority of the people.This reversal challenges democratic legitimation processes since democratic consensus today is used to justify cutting back the welfare state , to reduce real income to strengthen inner and external security forces instead of developing public services. Apparantly, most people accept this reversal — at least insofar as electoral results reveal what people want.

The implementation of last decade's neo-conservative ideologies is a reaction to the international economic crisis. Neo-conservative politics attempts to manage an economic crisis which even a retired *Realpolitiker* like Helmut Schmidt recently compared to the situation of the Thirties. But there is actually no comparison between the present situation and then, either in terms of the Rooseveltian strategy of Keynesian state interventionism on Hitler's authoritarian state. There is only one parallel: people believe in the rationality of a politics which, given their interests, is irrational. Ideas of sacrifice, law and order, security and the national community have turned in force.

How is this possible? On what moral resources is neo-conservatism founded? Why does the majority tend ot the right during crises? It is not sufficient to question the interrelation of capitalist economy and state in structural or in functionalist terms. To

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understand the present neo-conservative mood, a social psychology is needed — and not simply a psychology of protesting minorities but one dealing with the majority. The crucial factor in the present capitalist crisis is not the post-materialist youth culture but a (pre-materialist) morality of the adult majority. Neo-conservatism is a mild form of authoritarianism which does not challenge democratic institutions but changes their functions by using anxiety as a major political factor.

Habermas is aware of the relation between critical theory and crisis. He allows a political critique of theoretical assumptions and he himself has been an important critic of neo-conservative philosophy. He argues that the dilemmas of late capitalism emerge from its attempt to conteract its inherent economic contradictions by shifting them to the state level. The state may temporarily succeed at managing these contradictions, but the crisis eventually spread beyond the economic and the political spheres. Cultural and motivational disintegration become serious threats. What Habermas calls the "motivational crisis" is now translated as "the colonisation of the life world." This colonisation is the result of demands for system integration which penetrate the life world causing social pathologies — some of which can lead to political protest.

The most interesting point is a negative one. Apparently Habermas' account does not account for trends like the conservative mood presently dominating Western politics and he pays no attention to the conservative potential of the moral majority He seems fascinated only by countercultural trends. To understand why Habermas ignores the conservative backlash, one must turn to his concept of the"life-world."

Habermas' approach is a theory of modernity. Modern society is defined not only by the differentiation of system integration — i.e., of captial and state — but by the rationalization of the life-world. Habermas proposes an evolutionary approach which identifies stages of rationalization. For a developed democratic political culture, rationalization means separation of legality and morality on the one hand, and the institutionalization of a general legitimating procedure on the other. What is lacking in Habermas is the demonstration of how legislative strategies undermine the autonomy of the family and of socialization. His evolutionary perspective overvalues the rationalization of the present political culture and undervalues the pre-democratic, authoritarian potential of neo-conservative politics. He is correct in stressing the stability of Western democracies, but he is wrong to ignore the antidemocratic and pre-modern political culture which is exploited in neo-conservative crisis management.

A serious critique of Habermas has to ask how this lack of political analysis is generated by the overall framework of his *Theory of Communicative Action.* Is the basic distinction between system and life-world adequate for a critical understanding of modern society? Among other traditions, the older "Frankfurt School" helps clarify the main intention of Habermas' work. For instance, at the end of his new book, Habermas outlines his own program for a Critical Theory built on the critique of his predecessors but still within the same framework.

I agree with Habermas' critique on three points. 1) The old Marxist functionalism is no longer adequate for late capitalism. 2) The philosophy of history developed in Horkheimer's and Adorno's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* projects a one-dimensional decline which is too restrictive. Finally, 3) the Frankfurt School's "critique of instrumental reason" is not clear about its own normative preconditions. It is unclear however, that the social psychological concepts outlined in Adorno's *Authoritarian Personality* or Marcuse's theory of one-dimensional culture are no longer valid. According to Habermas, these approaches are inadquate because they remain within the framework of the

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Dialectic of Enlightenment. But it is not correct that the older Critical Theorists' concept of alienation and objectification is idealist, and a psychological theory of personality remains crucial for understanding today's societies.

By discarding these psycho-sociological concepts, Habermas can no longer analyze the preconditions and the results of the political alienation typical of modern societies. The concept of the "colonization of the life world" is striking, but does it depict more than the tip of the iceberg? Habermas' evolutionary approach results in a rationalist understanding of modernity. But it tends to rationalize rather than to understand the existential nature of modern experience, and to ignore the concept of alienation as an expression of anxiety and powerlessness. This is the crucial weakness of Habermas' theory: he has no concept of anxiety, and hence does not grasp its political relevance. He does not see how it fits into the authoritarian potential of modern societies. Neo-conservatism must be understood not as totalitarianism but as an effective articulation of both alienation and anxiety.

Post-WW II critical theory avoids the limitations that Habermas locates in the *Dialectics of Enlightenment.* Attention had shifted from fascist regimes to the development of Western societies. This ended the original concern with Marxist functionalism by bringing the philosophy of history down to earth. There was no longer the integrating paradigm of Horkheimer's 1930's program. The collaborators of the New York Institute for Social Research went their own ways and their work is united negatively by their common rejection of Marxist functionalism. They were primarily interested in the mediation of politics and culture. It is ironic that the concept of mass society became central for them since it was originally formulated by such conservative thinkers as le Bon, Ortega y Gasset and Heidegger. It became central in explaining how capitalism and democracy are stabilized. In later critical theory, "mass society" displaced the Marxist concept of class while preserving features of Marxian class and crisis theory. Thus, Adorno's account of the authoritarian personality was not the result of an abstract critique of reason, as Habermas assumes. It was, rather, the product of a careful study of the U.S. middle classes in the 1940's. It applied the classical Freudian model of id, ego and super-ego to demonstrate that the authoritarian character is not the product of totalitarian regimes like national socialism but remains a problem in all developed capitalist societies. Its major symptoms are prejudice, ethnocentrism, false consciousness, aggression and/or the need for submission. This description is still valid 35 years later. The symptoms have changed. Instead of open aggression there is political apathy, instead of anti-Semitism there is anti-communism and anti-intellectualism, instead of the need for submission there is love of law and order . . . What remains unchanged are the personality structures that obstruct a democratic and tolerant political culture. Recent discussions of narcissism do not change this picture. This triumph of neo-conservatism, not the disintegration of Western democracies, is what needs to be explained.

Kirchheimer's theory of the vanishing opposition resulted from comparative studies of party development and political justice in Western democracies. He showed that the competition for power leads to an assimilation of party organization and party programs. Leftist oppositional parties became "catch all parties." Clear alternatives disappeared. Opposition presented itself simply as better government. The result is the integration of the party into the state. Kirchheimer diagnosed a similar trend in political justice. The traditional idea of the balance of powers portrayed the judicial system as independent of the executive and of the legislative branches. In legal practice, this is no longer the case, especially in the treatment of the opposition. When communists

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and other radicals are treated as enemies of democracy, judicial power becomes an instrument of repression. This suggests a long run trend to rehabilitate predemocratic elements within state theory and practice.

This is not the place to reconstruct Marcuse's well-known theses of late-capitalist integration. Despite "one-dimensionality", he pointed to a corrective to the notion of a completely integrated and therefore totalitarian late-capitalism outlined in Adorno's later writings. Habermas is correct in criticizing Adorno on this. But this should not lead to throwing away all the results of critical theory since the war. Still, the postwar production of Kirchheimer and Neumann is not even mentioned in Habermas' book. Habermas' approach thus misses a crucial aspect of the present crisis. If there is a threat to Western democracies, it is anxiety and its impact on the legitimation problems of these societies.

ZIONISM AND DETECTIVE FICTION: A CASE IN NARRATOLOGY

by Uri Eisenzweig

Zionism: the idea of a territorial concentration of the Jewish people in an autonomous entity as a solution to the Jewish Question. This definition (and the essay that follows) refers to Zionism as conceived by its first leaders and theoreticians — Leo Pinsker, Theodor Herzl, and Israel Zangwill, that is, to what is generally called "political" Zionism (as opposed to the nationalistic-religious trends that now dominate the so-called official "Zionist ideology in Israel).

Detective fiction: one narrative in search of another, the first arising from the discovery (or anticipation) of a crime, the second providing the identity of the criminal, his motivations and the modalities of his act. This paper will deal with "classical" detective fiction, in which the emphasis is on the analytical, cognitive-deductive aspect of the search.

Five years before joining Theodor Herzl as a leader of political Zionism, Israel Zangwill wrote a detective story. The rationale of this paper lies in the refusal of coincidence as an explanatory concept.

I.

It has been said that Zionism began when Herzl entered Zangwill's study. And indeed, this first encounter between the two men, which took place in London in November 1895, is highly symbolic of the profound change that was affecting Jewish society at that time.

Theoder Herzl, an assimilated Jew, had just written his pamphlet *The Jewish State*, the arche-text of Zionism, after having witnessed, as a Viennese journalist stationed in Paris, the anti-Semitic wave that characterized the Dreyfus Affair. On the other hand, Zangwill, whose youth had been spent in the London Ghetto, had become a respected

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English writer with the publication of the widely acclaimed *Children of the Ghetto* (1892), as well as works such as *Ghetto Tragedies* (1893), and *The King of Shnorrers* (1894). In fact, Zangwill, who was later to marry a Christian woman, embraced what he called a "new religion" and advocated women's rights and international pacifism, was somewhat on his way out of the ghetto (if not out of the Jewish society altogether) and into the modern cosmopolitan world, the very world that Herzl, in the wake of Dreyfus's trial, had just decided that Jews had better leave.

The encounter between the two men therefore symbolizes the birth of Zionism in that it resulted from two equally strong departures in Jewish life: one from assimilation and the other from the ghetto. Most importantly, it was precisely this double refusal that lead Herzl, Zangwill and an increasing number of other Jews to the common dream of an imaginary *locus*, a new place for their people to live in, one that would belong to neither the traditional Jewish world nor the Gentile one.

It is not my intention here to deal in detail with the origins of Zionism at the turn of this century. I would like to emphasize what we often tend to forget, or rather what some would like us to forget, namely, that the central question during the first years of the Zionist movement's existence was not the return to Zion, the fulfillment of biblical prophecies, but rather the finding of a territory, the dream of autonomy. This distinction is essential, if one is to grasp the thrust of the Zionist Revolution.

From Leo Pinsker who, in his *Auto-Emancipation* (1891), explicitly excluded Palestine as a possible territory for a united Jewish society, to Herzl himself who, in his *Jewish State,* spoke of an "unspecified" territory, at times hestitating between Palestine and Argentina, the main proponents of an autonomous Jewish society were concerned essentially with acquiring a piece of land, any land. As Zangwill himself put it, in his article "Zionism" (October 1899): "Dr. Herzl had begun with the dream of a state anywhere, so long as it brought Jewish independence and freedom from persecution."[1]

Eventually, of course, the Zionist enterprise would focus on Palestine alone. Under the pressure of the East-European Jews who, for socio-economic reasons, were much more rooted in Jewish tradition than their assimilated counterparts from the West, the Zionist organization rejected various suggestions made by Herzl and his friends (including Zangwill) that Jews colonize such remote and disparate countries as Argentina, Cyprus, Rhodesia, and, more concretely (since it had the official support of the British government), that they establish an autonomous society in part of what is known today as Kenya. This ultimate proposal of Herzl, which was to become known as the Ugandan (or East African) Offer, was finally rejected in 1905, after a fierce battle, one year after Herzl's death.

Defeated and now without his main ally in his struggle for a purely political, non-mystical, positivistic approach to the question of Jewish autonomy, Israel Zangwill decided to leave the Zionist Organization, and to create with his followers a parallel, rival movement, called the Jewish Territorial Organization, or ITO. The ITO supported the idea of creating an autonomous Jewish society on any possible territory (though preferably within the British Empire), and searched for it among other places in Western Australia, parts of Canada, Cyrenaica, Mesopotamia, and Manchuria. It also organized, in 1913, the emigration of some five thousand Russian Jews from Germany to the United States, through the port of Galveston, Texas. Finally, the ITO ceased to exist in 1924, two years before the death of its leader.

1. Israel Zangwill *Speeches, Articles and Letters of Israel Zangwill* (London: The Soncino Press, 1937), p. 157.

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The vote on the Ugandan offer can be regarded as a milestone in the history of Zionism. From 1905 on, the primacy of Palestine as the sole objective of the Zionist movement would no longer be questioned, at least not from within. Zangwill's break brought an end not only to a certain political approach to the Jewish question, but also, and more importantly, to a specific vision of the dreamed-of territory, and the consequences of this loss can be felt today as much as in the past — perhaps more so.

I will deal with this vision, this imaginary territory, in a very specific context: its relation to another imagined space, the locked room in which a fictional murder has been committed.

Such a *locus* appears in an early piece of fiction by Zangwill: *The Big Bow Mystery*, written and published in 1891. The story takes place in London: a landlady, unable to waken her lodger asks her neighbor, a retired policeman, to help her break into his room, which is locked from the inside. The policeman bursts in and the woman discovers her lodger dead, obviously murdered, his throat cut. The rest of the story deals with the official inquest, the various explanations put forward as to what happened, and how it could have happened. Eventually, the murderer unmasks himself: the retired policeman, wishing to ridicule and embarrass his successor as chief investigator ast Scotland Yard, had planned and executed this seemingly perfect crime. Counting on the fact that he would be the first person to whom the landlady would turn for help, he had administered a potent drug to the lodger the night before, and cut the sleeping man's throat the moment he entered the room.

The Big Bow Mystery has been recognized by the knowledgeable readers of the genre as occupying "a prominent place in the development of the detective story," because "it was the first significant story to be based solidly and solely on the concept of the locked-room."[2] [E.F. Bleiler, ed., *Three Victorian Detective Novels* (New York: Dover, 1978), p. XV.] A locked-room mystery consists of a crime committed in a place having all the exits locked from the inside and no criminal inside. Among the texts that deal with this type of mystery are such classics as the first detective story in the history of literature itself, Edgar Allan Poe's *Murders in the Rue Morgue* (1841), *The Adventure of the Speckled Band*, by Conan Doyle (1982), and Gaston Leroux's *Le Mystère de la chambre jaune* (1908).

The Big Bow Mystery has been all but ignored by the various studies of Zangwill's life and work, probably because of the common perception that a detective story does not deserve such attention. Such a perception is by large mistaken. In this case, however, it is not from the mere point of view of literary study that Zangwill's detective fiction calls for a close reading. The text was written in 1891, barely four years before Theodor Herzl wrote another text, another *narrative (The Jewish State)*, dealing with a crime (anti-semitism) and with a space more or less sealed off from the rest of the world (the future autonomous Jewish homeland) — and about five years before Zangwill himself embarked on a long intellectual journey that would lead him to territorialism, that vision of a pure, empty, virgin space waiting for a nation to burst in and to fertilize it.

Such contiguity, in time as in social context, may be considered as purely coincidental. Yet any approach seeking to uncover ideology at work in literature and to point out phantasmal aspects of political discourse should at least consider the possible connection between such imaginary spaces, both born in the half-assimilated mind of a European, bourgeois Jew at the turn of the century.

The following lines will thus draw a comparison between the territory dreamed of,

2. E.F. Bleiler, ed., *Three Victorian Detective Novels* (New York: Dover, 1978), p. XV.

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for a future Jewish autonomous society, by Zangwill, Herzl, and others, and the locked room in detective fiction. (The mystery presented in Zangwill's story is basically the same as in any other locked-room mystery; as for its specific *dénouement*, it will be discussed later on). These two spaces, embedded in their respective narratives, reflect one another in a mirror-like structure. The implication of this structure are multiple, on the ideological as well as on the epistemological level.

II.

First, the striking similarities. The main one lies in the notion of *autonomy*, explicit in the Zionist dream, and implicit in the closure of the *locus* where a mysterious crime has been committed. Both the locked room and the territory are autonomous with regard to the world that surrounds them. It must be emphasized that in both cases this autonomy is, on the one hand, a consequence of a *crime* (anti-semitism or murder) and, on the other hand, a correlative of *emptiness*: nobody is inside the locked room (this being precisely what makes it impenetrable, thus autonomous); the Zionist plan for Jewish settlement and social cohesiveness in the autonomous territory demands that no one — no other identity, no other nation — be in that territory.

It is significant in this context that Zangwill was one of the first Zionists to draw attention to the fact that Palestine was inhabited by about 600,000 Arabs.[3] Eventually, the Arab presence in Palestine became one of the main reasons for his leaving the Zionist Organization and creating the ITO. Subsequently, in defining his notion of "the" territory, he emphasized the fact that it "must be an empty and comparatively unpopulated country", and that it sould be, so to speak "a new creation."[4] ["A Land of Refuge." 1907, in *Speeches, op, cit.*] Chracteristically, Zangwill was also one of the first Zionist leaders to suggest a possible generalized trek of the Palestinian Arabs to the neighboring Arab countries, while also supporting Herzl's opposition to any Jewish settlement in Palestine before an agreement could be reached with the Turkish authorities — as if, strangley enough, the territory's absolute, sterile emptiness was a *sine qua non* for ensuring its autonomy.[5]

Now, obviously, if nobody is *in* (in the territory or the locked room), then everybody must be *out*. And the fact is that in both Zangwill's Zionist plan and detective fiction everybody is out of the autonomous space — at least at the starting point of the narrative. Everybody: the murderer and the anti-semite, the Jew and the detective. There is, however, an essential difference between these two couples, between the good characters of the story and the evil ones. Both in Zionism and in the locked-room mystery, the central (and positive) figure, be it the detective or the Zionist Jew, is defined literally by the desire to penetrate the space he is facing. It is precisely this desire that lies at the origin of the narrative itself, that is, at the origin of the sequence of events that will lead to the utimate goal of the Zionist (an autonomous Jewish society) or of the detective (the unraveling of the mystery). In other words, Zionist dream and locked-room mystery are essentially similar in that in both cases a narrative originates from a crime and from a subsequent desire to penetrate a space whose main connotation is the concept of autonomy.

3. See, for example, his speeches "The East African Offer" (1905) and "Territorialism as Practical Politics" (1913) in *Speeches*.

4. "A Land of Refuge," 1907, in *Speeches, op. cit.*

5. Its *future* autonomy, one might add. Indeed, it is of a particular interest to note that political Zionism, emphasizing the discursive nature of the dreamed-of autonomy (charters, declarations, contracts, etc.), often seems to confuse the issues, and to pay more attention to the status of the sought-after territory than to that of the new Jewish society that was to settle in it.

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III.

With the emergence of the narrative, however, the similarities end — or rather, an *inversion* typical of reflecting structures appears. For one thing, the original crime itself is not committed at the same place in both cases: in the mystery story the crime is committed *inside* the autonomous space, while anti-semitism, by definition, occurs *outside*, in the Diaspora. In other words, the room where the murder has been committed is locked precisely *because* of the crime — in a way, the closure of the room is part of the crime itself — whereas from a Zionist point of view, the anti-semitic crime can be committed only in a situation where there is *no* autonomy, no separate territory for the Jewish people.

This invasion indicates that the two narratives will go in opposite directions in the constitution of the dreamed-of space. The detective wants to enter the room precisely *because it is locked* (and therefore mysterious), while the Zionist wants to penetrate his conceptual territory *in order to lock it up*. More specifically: the moment the detective enters the *locus* of the murder, it is not locked anymore, whereas the autonomy of the Zionist territory comes into being only *after* the Jewish people settle in it.

The inversion indicates the crucial role, in both fictions, of the narrative inside the narrative. Again, there is a basic similarity: the Zionist and the detective ultimately seek to create a story. Beyond the pursuit of the criminal, the core of detective fiction is the desire to tell the story of the crime. And what does "making (Jewish) history" amount to, if not the creation of a new narrative? But there is more. This narrative desire in both cases springs from an apparent impossibility to do so. The mystery of the detective story consists of nothing more, after all, than the absence of a plausible story relating what has happened; similarly, the impasse felt by Herzl, Zangwill and others, in view of the Dreyfus Affair and of the coming end of traditionally secluded Jewish social life in Eastern Europe, is a possible end to Jewish History, that is, to a *narrative*?[6] In both detective fiction and Zionism there is an acute sense of an impossibility.

Significantly, the two sought-after narratives stand on opposite temporal sides with regard to the main event, the penetration of the fictional space. The detective wants to narrate the past, the origin, the crime: his work consists of assembling clues, so that the story can be told of what happened up to the point where he entered the room, or rather, since the reader must be kept in the dark as to the solution of the mystery, until the text itself begins. The very mystery in which the crime is shrouded is correlative to its having been committed in the past, before the beginning of the story. Detective fiction, by definition, is a narrative seeking to reconstitute its own origin in the form of another narrative.

The political Zionist, on the other hand, seeks not to tell the past as much as to *erase* it, to annihilate the very circumstances that lead to his entering the autonomous new space, to abolish and exclude from his experience the Diaspora and its intrinsic component, anti-semitism. Zionism, or at least Zionism as Zangwill and Herzl saw it, seeks to create a new narrative about and in the future, a narrative that is to replace rather than continue the story of the past.[7]

6. In such context, the sometimes astonishing prescience of various Zionists at the turn of the century, as to what would happen to the European Jews some forty years later, could probably be explained in terms of narratology rather than of prophecy: it is not Hitler they were predicting as much as the structurally ineluctable end of a certain kind of narrative, or a certain kind of narration.

7. In this perspective, it is revealing that whenever Zangwill tried to emphasize the specificity of his own brand of Zionism, which came to be known as Territorialism, as opposed to the East-European, more traditionally rooted Zionism that was focused on Palestine, — he could not but

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So while the detective seeks to narrate the crime that started it all, the political Zionist wishes to narrate a future that will end it all. The Zionist enters the new territory in order to *cut* his ties with the past (to *avoid*, once and for all, the anti-semite), whereas the detective penetrates into the locked-room in order to *link* the present with the past (to *catch*, once and for all, the murderer), to explain what is *now* (usually a corpse found in baffling circumstances) by telling the story of what happened *then*. True, the closure of the autonomous space has a similar function in both Zionism and detective fiction: it *disconnects* the future from the past, as it disconnects the inside from the outside. But while it is an obstacle for the detective, closure constitutes the very aim of the Zionist endeavor. The detective wants to put an end to the autonomy of the locked room, whereas such autonomy is precisely what Zionism is all about. Zangwill's mystery fiction and Zionist dream ultimately represent an exact reflection of each other: they look alike, but they head in opposite directions.

IV.

Still, and this is most significant, they cannot go far. They cannot because their nature is exclusively *textual*, and because there is a structural contradiction that prevents autonomy and narrative from coexisting in a text.

This contradiction appears clearly in detective fiction, through the paradox of a mystery to be solved by the very narrative that creates it in the first place. If the story of the events that occurred prior to the detective's investigation is to be shrouded in mystery, various elements relating to these events must be missing from the text; yet, if an acceptable solution is to be found, these very elements have to appear in the text, all the same. We confront the famous question of the "honesty" of the narrator in detective stories: has the initial situation been presented thoroughly, or a crucial clue been kept from the reader? There is no solution to this problem: if there is to be a mystery, it cannot be solved; if it is solved, it never really existed. There is a structural incompatibility in detective fiction betwen the solution of a mystery and the coherence of the narrative that leads to that solution.

Obviously, this distinctive feature of the genre deserves attention. Its various implications call for more penetrating comments than those traditionally expressed by a restrictive, normative approach to detective fiction (and to literature in general). Yet, there is no need for a detailed analysis in order to see that in the specific context of the locked-room murder, the concept of mystery is equivalent to that of autonomy, since the fact of the room being locked (that is: impenetrable, out of reach, *autonomous* with regard to the outside world) is precisely what makes the crime a mystery. Consequently, along with the mystery, the very notion of autonomy becomes problematic. No narrative can progress as long as the room remains sealed. Furthermore, to explain how the crime was committed, how the criminal got in or out, is actually to prove that the room was not really locked to begin with; and to state it *was* locked would be, in fact, to acknowledge not being able to tell the story of the crime. Hence, since telling that story is the textual function of the detective, one sees that the very existence of the narrative is threatened by the autonomy of the imaginary room. In other words, no autonomy can really exist inside this kind of text.

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underline the correlation between his notion of the needed territory and a linear, positivistic perception of Time. Palestine-centered Zionism, he wrote, "takes its vision and ideal from the past; Territorialism places them in the future. The one looks back, the other forward . . . Time never retraces its steps. Even if Judea is re-established in Palestine, it can never be the old Judea over again" ("The Territorial Solution of the Jewish Problem," *Fortnightly Review*, April 1919).

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One might say that here *is* a mystery, or rather that there *was* one before the detective came to be; that the room was actually locked before the text started. But even this does not hold: the end of the mystery story dispels any illusions that existed at its beginning; the explanation given by the detective tells us, in one way or another, that the room was not locked at all (or that there was no crime). By focusing on its own origin, on what preceded its own existence, detective fiction does not allow for *any* past event to remain shrouded in mystery. Ultimately, the only genuine mystery exists in the *future*, and the detective, the reader, and the writer, have not even heard about it. The only really locked room is one where no crime has het been discovered, or even suspected.

A similar paradox characterizes Herzl's and Zangwill's Zionist discourse, for the territory they dream of is, *by definition*, anything but autonomous; it is still an integral part of the colonial world. I do not wish to deal here with the controversial issue of the complex connections between the rise of Zionism and colonialism. Still, one must remember that a certain amount of cooperation, or at least negotiation, with the colonial powers, was essential to the political thrust of Zionism in its early stage (1897-1905). Zangwill was perhaps the most extreme in his desire to reach an agreement with these powers, particularly with England. The various territories suggested or thought of by Herzl, Zangwill and other political Zionists as possible *loci* of Jewish settlement were always parts of colonial empires.

I would like to emphasize the reason for this lies not only in practical considerations, but, perhaps essentially, in the very structure of Zionist imagination, namely, in the unspecified nature of the dreamed-of territory. At the turn of the century, such unspecified territory was necessarily a colony: only colonies could express the unique epistemological and geographical position of being neither the Self nor the Other, neither here nor there, while also being devoid of any real demographical *presence*. Beyond the political, pragmatic needs dictated by circumstances, there is an inherent — indeed, tragic — correlation between the very nature of the Zionist idea of the needed territory and its inscription in the colonial world.[8]

Hence, spatial autonomy is essentially elusive in political Zionist discourse. The closer one gets to the dreamed of terrritory, the less autonomous it proves to be, since its being securely entrenched in a colonial status is precisely what makes it a possible *locus* for Jews to settle in, to acquire, or simply to dream of — that is: to integrate into a textual narrative, the narrative that tells of the future Jewish national revolution.

In other words, as in detective fiction, autonomy and narrative cannot coexist in Zionism. In Zangwill's and Herzl's writings, the very possibility of obtaining a territory, that is, of making history, depends on the territory being, by definition, non-autonomous — exactly as the enunciation of a solution to the locked-room mystery, the telling of the story of the crime, implies that the room was, after all, not really locked in both cases, there is a fundamental paradox: *an autonomous space originating a narrative proves to be illusory, precisely because of that narrative.*

The similarity is not absolute: Zionism and detective fiction reflect each other as in a mirror. While in detective fiction, the telling of the crime dispels any illusion about a *past* autonomy, the very structure of the political Zionist scheme implies that no such autonomy can exist in the *future*. The more coherent the detective's solution, and the more real the crime, the more obvious is the fact that the room was not really locked. The closer the Zionist movement gets to acquiring a territory, the more it becomes

8. Obviously, such question calls for a more careful, detailed analysis, which has no place here. I have tried to provide such an analysis in my book *Territoires occupés de l'imaginaire juif* (Paris: Christian Bourgois, 1980).

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clear that this territory, being "for sale," is anything but autonomous. The only possible autonomy of the unspecified territory dreamed of by Zionism belongs to the past, before it was colonized (or, if you will, before it entered Western discourse), just as the only real criminal mystery (or locked room) belongs to the future, after the end of the present detective story.

Thus at the core of both political Zionism and classical detective fiction lies an impossibility. Both the locked room where a murder has supposedly been committed and the conceptual territory political Zionism hoped to materialize call for a narrative that is either incoherent or impossible. The similarity between the two imaginary spaces goes beyond what is, to include also what is not.

V.

There is a definite mirror-like connection between Zangwill's conceptual territory and the locked room of *The Big Bow Mystery*, between the *locus* dreamed by political Zionism, and the place of a fictional murder.What does this mean?

On a methodological level, the implications are obvious, yet worth mentioning. A parrallel between what seems to be a geo-political concept and a purely fictional image questions the autonomy of fiction, as well as the possibility of pragmatic politics. It threatens the legitimacy of political discourse by uncovering its hidden, dream-like, non-pragmatic dimension, and, by the same token, it gives textual analysis (or at least a certain kind of textual analysis) a meaning or a scope which academia tends to exclude.

The correlation between the stuctural function of the locked room in classical detective fiction and the perception of colonial space in modern epistemology may provide the beginning of an explanation of the popularity of this literary genre. At the same time, by so integrating the supposedly functional, technical idea of political Zionism's territory into a network of pure images, of phantasms, this analysis raises questions — and helps to give some answers — about the history of the Zionist enterprises in Palestine, as well as some current problems in the Middle-East.

This is obviously not the place to debate such difficult, touchy questions. Hence, there will be no conclusions to this analysis, but rather a tentative prelude to another, hypothetical one, which would deal with what I have carefully put aside so far. The locked room is a space where a *crime* has been committed!

This is crucial because the crime is what causes the detective to intervene, the story to be narrated. Yet, the crime is also what eludes the detective, what seems at first impossible to narrate. We have seen that there is a structural contradiction between the room being really locked and the crime having really been committed, between the substance of the mystery and the possibility of telling what has happened. The choice facing the story is, therefore, either to give no solution or to acknowledge, in one way or another, that there was no mystery to begin with.

This is not necessarily a black and white choice. As a matter of fact, the most famous detective stories dealing with a locked-room mystery are those that preserve a maximum of coherence by keeping the room *almost totally* locked, or locked *in a certain way*, while at the same time providing the reader with a plausible answer. Significantly, this plausible answer is always essentially the same. In Poe's *Murders in the Rue Morgue*, it is an orang-outang that is found to have killed the two women after reaching the only open window of the room by jumping from a lightning-rod several feet away from it. In Conan Doyle's *Adventure of the Speckled Band*, it is a snake that penetrates the room through a vent and, subsequently, kills the young woman. And in Leroux's *Mystère de la*

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chambre jaune nothing really *happens* in the locked room other than a *dream* in which the heroine re-enacts an aggression suffered several hours earlier. There are other similar examples.

In all these stories, where the mystery seems to have been real (the room *was* locked), the criminal character is non-existent. For, what are an ape, a snake and a dream if not just what a character is *not*? Such non-identity is a function of the impossibility of telling what has happened. In other words, the coherence of these detective stories lies in the fact that the animal or the sleeper expresses the paradoxical position of the bearer of an impossible action: *absence of presence*. The peculiar status of the sleeper or of the animal fulfills the needs of a narrative that wants us to believe that something presented at first as being strictly impossible can later be proven to be a fact. *Nobody could have gotten in or out of the room: it is, therefore, a "nobody" that committed the crime.*

Now, such non-identity is also at the center of Zangwill's only detective-fiction, giving it its textual coherence. However, from this specific point of view, *The Big Bow Mystery* stands aside, since the "nobody" here is not the criminal. In the context of our comparison between the conceptual territory dreamed of by Zionism and the locked room in detective stories, one cannot but be deeply disturbed by the fact that in the fiction by Herzl's friend, it is the *victim* who is asleep. The victim is the inhabitant of the autonomous space! And that the murderer is the detective, that is: the hero of the story.

And if one is, like me, an Israeli Jew (and, I might add, a sympathizer of political Zionism's motivations), one cannot but wonder about the present political implications of Zangwill's dreams, be it fiction or vision. For in each case, the dream seems to say that it is the Other who is asleep.

TAYLORISM AND UNIONISM: THE ORIGINS OF A PARTNERSHIP

by John Zerzan

Jenkins has observed that "The impression has begun to get about that the Industrial Revolution is not going to work out after all."[1] In light of the profound malaise of blue and white collar workers, the decline of output per worker since 1973, and increasing signs of a pervasive anti-union sentiment complementing anti-management restiveness, Jenkins' remark does not seem so shocking. The 1973 Health, Education and Welfare report, *Work In America*, remarked, in a similar vein, that "absenteeism, wildcat strikes, turnover, and industrial sabotage (have) become an increasingly significant part of the cost of doing business."[2]

The location of this quote from the HEW report in the section titled, "The Anachronism of Taylorism" is suggestive. Because of many mistaken notions about scientific

1. David Jenkins, *Job Power: Blue and White Collar Democracy* (Baltimore, 1974), p. 9.
2. Department of Health, Education of Welfare, *Work in America* (Cambridge, Mass., 1973), p. 19.

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management's historical role, much of industrial society is misunderstood. The genesis of Taylorism as "scientific management," and the developing relation of this system to trade unionism are especially crucial.

When Taylor began his efforts at the Midvale Steel Company in the 1880s, several members of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers were likewise interested in labor management.Industrial capitalism was running up against renewed resistance from the growing ranks of labor, still committed to a sense of work integrity and craftsmanship. Task management, or scientific management as it came to be called, began to take shape in the eighties as the way to break the workers' threatening resistance. The heart of this approach is the systematic reduction of work into discrete, routinized tasks, totally separated from any policy decisions about the job. Taylor realized that employees exert a vital influence because they possess crucial talents needed in any productive process. As he put it in his *Principles of Scientific Management,* "foremen and superintendents know, better than anyone else, that their own knowledge and personal skill falls far short of the combined knowledge and dexterity of all the workmen under them."[3] For capitalism to be firmly in control, it must monopolize information and techniques as surely as it controls the rest of the means of production. The worker must be permitted only to perform certain specific narrow tasks as planned by management.

Naturally, it made sense to publicly promote scientific management as geared directly to problems of profit and productivity, although its aim was control of production. In fact, at that time capital's problem was indeed, not so much one of the productivity. Giedion's comparison of American and German industry shows that Germany's greater reliance on worker skill was cheaper than the American tendency to mechanize.[4] Thus the introduction of Taylorism was primarily a social and even political response, rather than a matter of economics or 'neutral' technology. The proponents of the new regimentation sought to invest it with an aura of impartiality, to evoke a theoretical legitimacy useful to capitalism as a whole.[5]

Despite these pseudo-scientific apologies for the Taylorist approach, the public rapidly developed a very negative view of it. As the Taylor Society admitted with surprising candor, scientific management was widely seen as "the degradation of workmen into obedient oxen under the direction of a small body of experts — into men debarred from creative participation in their work."[6] The public's accurate evaluation of scientific management practice finds its source in the contempt in which Taylor and

3. Frederick W. Taylor, *Principles of Scientific Management* (New York, 1911), p. 32.

4. Siegfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command* (New York, 1948), p. 38. [C. Bertrand Thompson made the same point in 1917 when he pointed out the absence of competitive pressure behind firms employing scientific management, "for the reason that most of them now using it stand in a quasi-monopoly position in which there is no necessity to reduce their prices . . ."] See his *The Theory and Practice of Scientific Management* (Boston, 1917), pp. 88-89.

5. Mary Follett of the Taylor Society, for example, claimed that with scientific management, "authority is derived from function" and thus "has little to do with hierarchy of position as such . . ." [See Taylor Society, H.S. Person, Editor, *Scientific Management in American Industry* (New York, 1929), p. 436.] Typical pronouncements claimed that it embodied "a new kind of authority which stemmed from the unveiling of scientific law," [See Samuel Haber, *Efficiency and Uplift* (Chicago, 1964), p.25.] and that it substituted joint obedience of employers and workers "to fact and law for obedience to personal authority." [See Robert Franklin Hoxie, *Scientific Management and Labor* (New York, 1915), p. 9.] The time-study man, measuring and manipulating the worker with his stopwatch, relies on "unimpeachable data." [Horace D. Drury, *Scientific Management* (New York, 1915), p. 59.]

6. Taylor Society, *op. cit.*, p. 46.

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his followers held workers. Referring to his experience at Bethlehem Steel, Taylor described the iron handler he encountered as stupid, phlegmatic, and ox-like.[7] Yet, despite attempts to downgrade their subjects, scientific management tracts are full of admonitions to proceed slowly, due to workers' resistance. It was regularly repeated that several years are needed to reorganize a plant on the scientific management basis.[18] The Taylor Society warned employers to expect strikes and sabotage, to proceed with cunning so as to infiltrate under false appearances, and to expect opposition at every step.[9] The struggle concerned progresive attempts to debase work.[10]

Although a survey of management and personnel journals[11] makes it clear that scientific management is the foundation of work organization everyday experiences bring the point home with painful clarity. Braverman notes that control assumed "unprecedented dimensions" with Taylor and it has engendered serious opposition. The works of Braverman, Marglin, and others since the mid-70s, discuss the social/political control essence of Taylorism. What is less understood, however, is the nature of the struggle between workers and controllers, and the role of unionism in it.

The two standard works on the subject, McKelvey's *AFL Attitudes Toward Production* (1952) and Nadworny's *Scientific Management and the Unions* (1955) argue that organized labor switched from a hostile attitude toward Taylorism before WW I, to a warmly receptive one thereafter. This judgement is mistaken. The error stems from the perennial confusion of union attitude with rank and file attitudes. It would be much more accurate to say that workers seem to have opposed scientific management all along, while the unions seemed only briefly opposed, but have never really been against it.

Turning first to the union attitudes toward Taylorism in the pre-War period, we find anything but concerted opposition. In 1895, for example, when Taylor first presented his ideas to the American Society of Mechanical Engineers, John A. Penton, ex-president of the Brotherhood of Machine Molders joined the discussion of Taylor's paper. This former union official, speaking "as a workman," was more lavish in his praise than any of the others. Urging that the paper be put into the hands of every employer and employee. Penton termed it "perhaps the most remarkable thing of its kind I ever heard in my life. I can sympathize with every word. His paper, I think, is a landmark in the field of political economy.[12]

In 1907, David Van Alstyne of the American Locomotive Company secured an

7. Taylor, *Principles, op. cit.,* p. 59. H. L. Gantt, one of Taylor's leading disciples, spoke of implementing the task system as "the standard method of teaching and training children." [See his *Wages and Profits* (New York, 1919), p. 122.] Since "the worker became an object in Taylor's hands," in Jacques Ellul's phrase, it follows easily that he would be seen as an animal or a child by the Taylorites. Another part of the justification, was Taylor's notion of the "economic man," that a worker's real motivation is money and nothing else. [See Sudhir Kakar, *Frederick Taylor: A Study in Personality and Innovation* (Cambridge, Mass., 1970) p. 99.]

8. Hugh G. J. Aitken, *Taylorism at Watertown Arsenal* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960) pp. 112, 137, 140, 158, 161, for example.

9. Taylor Society, op. cit., pp. 447, 450, 453.

10. That the fight to control work was the heart of the contest can be seen in such articles as "Who's Boss in Your Shop?" from the August, 1917 *Bulletin* of the Taylor Society. In fact, the first effort of Taylor to lay out his theory, in "A Piece-Rate System" (1895) underlines the fact that the problem to be solved is the antagonism between workers and employers. [See Frederick W. Taylor "A Piece-Rate System," *Transactions of the American Society of Mechanical Engineers* (New York: A.S.M.E., 1895), pp. 891-898.]

11. See, for example, H. Jack Schapiro and Mahmoud A. Wahba's "Frederick W. Taylor - 62 years later," *Personnel Journal,* August 1974, which argues that the "economic man" model, in which money is the prime motivator still (sic) obtains.

12. Taylor, *"A Piece-Rate System,"* op. cit. (Discussion: Mr. John A. Penton), pp. 888-9.

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agreement with the molders' and blacksmiths' union for the introduction of Taylorism into the company's U.S. and Canada shops. Though the molders and blacksmiths thus were prevented from fighting the degrading methods, the unorganized machinists in Pittsburgh walked out, "seething" with anger.[13]

Commons provided the cardinal reason for the unions' absence of hostility to Taylorism:" . . . the unions have generally come to the point of confining their attention to wages — that is. to distribution — leaving to employers the question of production."[14] If either McKelvey or Nadworny had examined collective bargaining agreements reached prior to World War I,[15] they would have most likely discovered the "management's rights" clause found in every U.S. union contract until the early 1980s. This clause vests the sole right to set work methods, job design, assignments, etc. with management; this is of fundamental importance in understanding why unionism could not oppose scientific management or any other kind of management system. It is easy to see why, when Taylorism became a public issue in 1911, AFL officials could not have found historical grounds for opposition.[16] Thus, when Nadworny mentions the arrangement made between Plimpton Press and the Typographical Union in 1914, whereby the union agreed to accept scientific management in return for closed shop recognition, or the arrangement between the New York garment industry and the International Ladies Garment Workers' Union in 1916, involving the same exchange, these are not aberrations.

In fact, well before the War the idea began spreading that unionization, with its standard "management's rights" clause contracts, was the best approach for fitting the Taylorist yoke on the workers. The efficacy of this "trojan horse" tactic of union mediation led Thompson to prescribe industrial unionism over the AFL's craft unionism as the best way to secure the Taylor system in industry. Describing "one plant where scientific management was fully developed and in complete operation, the management has itself authorized and aided the organization of its employees." Thompson went so far as to urge recognition of the Industrial Workers of the World, to secure "the necessary unanimity of action" in linking all the workers, not only the skilled ones, to Taylorism.[17]

The ostensibly radical I.W.W. might seem an unlikely candidate for the job of Taylorizing workers, but several Wobbly spokesmen actually saw in scientific management much of value toward stabilizing and rationalizing production "after the Revolution." And from the rest of the American Left, many other sympathetic voices could be heard. Enthusiasm for the system seemed to cut across ideological lines. Lenin's support of Taylorism is well-known, and John Spargo, an influential American Socialist, denounced everything about the Bolshevik Revolution save Lenin's adoption of scientific management.[18]

13. Drury, *op. cit.,* p. 187; Milton Nadworny, *Scientific Management and the Unions* (Cambridge, Mass., 1955), pp. 27-28.

14. John R. Commons, "Restrictions by Trade Unions," *The Outlook,* October, 1906.

15. Surveying the notes and bibliography sections of McKelvey's and Nadworny's books on the subject, we find that McKelvey looked at only two contracts (signed in 1925, and 1930) and that Nadworny examined none.

16. Haber, *op. cit.,* p. 67.

17. Thompson, *op. cit.,* p. 96 and p. 155.

18. Henry L. Gantt, a conservative Taylor disciple, admired the Leninist dictatorship, especially, of course, its Taylorist component. And Morris L. Cooke, a liberal Taylorite, of whom it was said in 1915 that "no one has done more to boaden the scope of scientific management." was one of the first spokesman to publicly urge the Taylor Society to recognize its natural partner in unionism. Cooke, not surprisingly, became in the 1930s a prominent CIO advocate. [See Drury, *op. cit.,* p. 153.]

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While the official union and radical spokesmen for the workers were finding no fault with scientific management, the workers were acting against it on their own. An attempt to introduce Taylorism at the huge Rock Island goverment arsenal in 1908 was defeated by the intense opposition it aroused. It is interesting that these "unorganized" workmen did not appeal to a union for help, but confronted the setting of piece rates and the division of tasks by themselves — and immediately demanded that the method be discontinued. Likewise, the beginnings of Taylorism at the Frankford arsenal were defeated by the hostility of the ("unorganized") employees there in 1910 and 1911. In October, 1914, the 3,000 garment workers of Sonnenborn and Company in Baltimore walked out spontaneously upon hearing that Taylorism was to be installed.[19]

The case of Taylorism at the U.S. arsenal at Watertown, Massachusetts in 1911 clearly demonstrates the need for not confusing unions with workers, "organized" or not. If this is as close as unions came in practice to opposing the new system, it is safe to say that they did not oppose it at all. When the idea of Taylorizing Watertown first arose in 1908, Taylor warned that the government managers must have the complete system. "Anything short of this leaves such a large part of the game in the hands of the workmen that it becomes largely a matter of whim or caprice on their part as to whether they will allow you to have any real results or not."[20]

It is clear that Taylor himself mistook the quiescence of the AFL unions, which represented various arsenal workers, for passivity on the part of the employees. He counseled a Watertown manager in 1910 "not to bother too much about what the AFL write (sic) concerning our system," and in March, 1911, just before the strike, he tried again to allay any management fears of worker resistance by pooh-poohing any AFL correspondence which might be received in the future.[21] He knew the unions would not seriously interfere; his elitism prevented a clear appraisal of worker attitudes.

When the time-study man, Merrick, openly timed foundry workers with a stopwatch, action was forthcoming immediately. Although union members, they did not call the union, but instead drew up a petition demanding the cessation of any further Taylorist intrusions. Being rebuffed, they walked out. Joseph Cooney, a molder in the foundry, testified early in 1912 to the Congressional committee examining Taylor's system, that there had been no contact between the workers and any union official and that the stike had been completely spontaneous.[22] Though an overwhelming majority of Watertown employees questioned by a consultant (hired by a group of workers) felt that the unions had no interest in agitating against scientific management,[23] the International Association of Machinists publicly proclaimed union opposition to the system shortly after the 1911 strike. Because this public opposition by the IAM in 1911 is practically the sole evidence supporting the thesis of pre-War union hostility to Taylorism,[24] it deserves a closer look.

19. Matthew Josephson, *Sidney Hillman* (Garden City, N.Y., 1952), pp. 111-112.
20. Taylor Papers, "Taylor or Ruggles." February 17, 1908.
21. Hugh G. J. Aitken, *Taylorism at Watertown Arsenal* (Cambridge, Mass., 1960), pp. 67-68.
22. Hearings Before Social Committee of the House of Representatives to Investigate the Taylor and Other Systems of Shop Management Under the Authority of House Resolution 90." Vol. I, p. 230. Other testimony made it clear, furthermore, that workers' resentment was fueled by the anti-workmanship aspects of Taylorism. Isaac Goostray and Alexander Crawford, for example, spoke of the pressures to slight their work and reduce their level of craftsmanship.
23. Aitken, op. cit., pp. 23-224.
24. For example, Haber, *op. cit.*, declares that organized labor was solidly against scientific management during this period (p. 66), but only cites IAM statements (pp. 67-69) to support this view.

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In 1909, as McKelvey notes, the initial features of scientific management were installed at Watertown, without the slightest protest from the unions, including the IAM.[25] At about this time, the National League of Government Employees began to make inroads on the IAM, due to the dissatisfaction of the latter group's members. The rival organization had drawn away many members by the time of the 1911 strike,[26] and the IAM was thus forced to make a show of opposition if it wished to retain its hold among the workers. In similar fashion, the International Molders' Union had to give grudging support to a strike of Boston molders which had ocurred without so much as informing the local union. The union leaders involved frequently made statements showing their actual support of Taylorism, and a careful reading of the 1911 AFL Convention record, also cited as evidence of anti-Taylorism by the unions, shows that Samuel Gompers avoided attacking directly the new work system in any substantial way.

The 1920s, with unionism's public embrace of scientific management and the falling away of union membership, was a victorious period for Taylorism. The age of the consumer began from the systematic destruction of much of the last autonomy of the producer. With the invaluable aid of unions, a healthy share of the content of work lives had been removed. Rorty saw the lack of militancy and initiative from workers in the early 1930s stemming directly from the technological processes to which they were enslaved.[27] The recent re-awakening of the struggle for a life of quality and meaning is informed with the knowledge that work itself is the major issue. It is unfortunate that the confusion about Taylorism and unionism continues, inasmuch as it bears heavily on an understanding of what trade unions really are.[28]

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25. Jean Trepp McKelvey, AFL *Attitudes Towards Production* (Ithaca, 1952), p. 16.
26. Aitken, *op. cit.*, pp. 183-184.
27. Richard H. Pells, *Radical Visions and American Dreams* (New York: Harper Torchbooks, 1973), p. 200.
28. Whereas Irving Bernstein's *The Lean Years: A History of the American Worker, 1920-1933* (New York, 1960) spoke of the 1920s' "sharp reversal in the AFL's historic opposition to scientific management," more recent efforts repeat the same error. James R. Green's *The World of the Worker* (New York, 1980) quotes Bernstein to the same general point (p. 127), also citing McKelvey and Nadworny. Daniel Nelson's *Frederick W. Taylor and the Rise of Scientific Management* (Madison, 1980) likewise repeats the myth of a pre-War "confrontation between scientific management and labor" (p. 164) which turned into truce and then collaboration during the 1920s (p. 202). *Management and Ideogy: The Legacy of the Interntional Scientific Management,* by Judith A. Merkle (Berkeley, 1980), also makes this error (pp. 8, 29) without bothering to mention Nadworny in the text or bibliography. This suggests that the mistaken thesis of union opposition to Taylorism has become an axiom. With Peter F. Meiksins' "Scientific Management and Class Relations", in Vol. 13 No. 2 (March 1984) *Theory and Society*, error on this topic takes a quantum leap. On page 184: " . . . the A.F. of L. was one of the earliest opponents of scientific management, and, while observers disagree as to the *extent* of worker resistence, it seems clear that Taylorism did provoke at least some strikes." Unionism is thus elevated even a bit higher yet, while rank-and-file antagonism is all but liquidated — an achievement which dispenses with the need for evidence. Sad to say, even Harry Braverman's excellent *Labor and Monopoly Capital: The Degradation of Work in the Twentieth Century* (New York, 1974) falls into this kind of distortion; although the work admittedly does not deal with workers' struggles, his sole reference to anti-Taylorism (p. 136) is his judgement that Scientific Management "raised a storm of opposition among the trade unions during the early part of this century."

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GOETHE AND FALSE SUBJECTIVITY*

by Leo Lowenthal

My original enthusiasm for the invitation of the city of Frankfurt to deliver the commemorative address on the occasion of the 150th anniversary of Goethe's death soon gave way to a state of depression. I thought of Walter Benjamin who, exactly fifty years ago, on the 100th anniversary of Goethe's death, wrote: "Every word about Goethe spared this year is a blessing." I then came across Thomas Mann's caustic remark made on the 200th anniversary of Goethe's birth in 1949, in his address "Goethe and Democracy": "I have nothing new to say to you." And as if this were not enough, Leo Kreutzer only recently told us that "there is no longer any idea connected with Goethe which might still be capable of playing any significant role."

Slowly, as I made myself more familiar with contemporary secondary literature I came around. I found formulations such as that of "cultural surplus value" in *Wilhelm Meister*, or the announcement of a "Psychogram of a great man and poet," and innumerable excursions into mythological, hermeneutical, existential, structuralist and post-structuralist realms.

I therefore re-considered the question of my legitimation. And as I was once a pupil at the Goethe-Gymnasium in Frankfurt, who wrote his graduation essay on the theme "To what extent is *Tasso* a fragment of a great confession?," and since I also happen to own a somewhat tattered doctoral hat from Johann Wolfgang Goethe University from the year 1923, and finally, as I also counted as one of the founding fathers of the so-called Frankfurt School, I found myself courageous enough to stand now before you.

In the history of his reception, Goethe has played much too often the role either of a pontificated chief witness or of a much maligned scapegoat, both of which actually conceal the lack of an authentic historical consciousness or sensitivity to tradition. The absurdity, if not the immorality involved in the marketing of this much-quoted but largely unread genius is perhaps best revealed in the saying from World War I, that each German soldier carried a copy of *Faust* and *Zarathustra* in his knapsack. One thing is nevertheless beyond doubt: Goethe and Nietzsche did have one thing in common: a steadfast avowal of world citizenship and a critically reserved attitude towards "fatherland." In Goethe's words: "The fatherland (is) nowhere and everywhere."

Chronological fate has it that Goethe celebrations, marking his birth and death in 50 and 100 year cycles, have heretofore always coincided with critical moments in German history. In 1849, one hundred years after his birth and shortly after the failure of the bourgeois revolution, there was hardly any mention of Goethe. In 1882 and 1889, during the founding years of the German empire and its boast as "self-healer of the world" (*Weltgenesens*), his reputation was immersed in the dishonest undertow of the Wilhelminian transfiguration. One may read in connection with the latter date Stefan George's angry poem "Goethetag." And as far as the former date is concerned we must shudder — since we know what later transpired — as we hear what the director of the

*Commemorative speech given on the 150th anniversary of Goethe's death in the Frankfurt St. Paul's church, March 22, 1982. Translated by Steven Stoltenberg.

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newly founded Goethe Society announces in his first address: "A great national empire knows how fully to appreciate the value of its greatest poet; the foundation and preservation of our people's political greatness goes hand in hand with the cultivation and furtherance of its intellectual goods." In 1932 the "Goethe Year" took place on the eve of the period of absolute sinfulness — I will return to this year — and in 1949 in the aftermath of the shock of complete destruction.

In August of 1949 Frankfurt University organized an international scholar's conference in honor of the 200th anniversary of Goethe's birth. The president of the university at that time, Franz Boehm, for whom I have the highest respect, delivered the welcoming address, which I happened to find in Leo Kreutzer's heretical book *Mein Gott Goethe*. In a very courageous manner Franz Boehm demolishes the ridiculous way in which Germans have quoted *their* Goethe during the stylized celebrations of national triumph or defeat, as a glorification of exploits or a covering up of crimes. Franz Boehm said "The call: Back to Goethe! does not convert us into a politically free people. It converts us into people who are destined to end up in a concentration camp should a regime of terror return once again. There is no path that leads from Goethe to National Socialism, nor to a liberation therefrom," and Boehm warns against the much touted supreme ideal of the culture of the self which "cannot achieve permanency if it does not have the power to produce out of itself a corresponding world of social and political culture." I believe that this refusal of the cult of inwardness can help us to a contemporary understanding of Goethe and thereby to a greater self-understanding. I mean to say that Franz Boehmn stands closer to us today than the great historian Friedrich Meinecke, who, immediately after the collapse of the National Socialist regime in 1946, wrote about the "German catastrophe" (the title of his book), and in his perplexity could find no other consolation than to conjure up Goethe. He speaks of "turning again to the altars of our fathers" and demands exactly that which should not be demanded and what in fact fully contradicts the spirit of his chief witness Goethe, when he exclaims: "Today everything depends on an internalization of our existence. Over the ruins of the Bismarck period we must find the path to Goethe's time." The program which he lays out at the conclusion of his book calls for "every German city and large locality to have their own Goethe community" whose task it will be on Sunday afternoon of each week (in a church if possible) "to transmit to the heart of the listener audibly the most living testimonies of the great German spirit." This anti-political cult of inwardness, proclaimed after the collapse of the Regime of Terror, reminds one of Ortega y Gasset's search for a "Goethe within" in 1932. Even if — as in both of these cases — it is recommended by two *hommes de bonne volonté*, this cult blocks any historically specific and thereby moral relevance for our time or any other. Regarding such proclamations, which quickly transform Goethe from a spiritual rarity into an article of mass culture, the *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung* stated in its Feuilleton section of the 18th of August, 1979 on the occasion of Goethe's 230th birthday: "His portrait still serves as the coat of arms of the German spirit." Indeed, the entire organized West German export of culture takes place in his name: he vouches for the quality of German products. Goethe is used as a brand name like Mercedes, Karajan or Siemens.

This official advertising cult celebrated one of its most painful moments on the eve of National Socialism. Just listen how Goethe was celebrated in Weimar Germany on the 22nd of March, 1932. The Weimar correspondent of the *Berliner Tageblatt* describes it as follows: "The minister-presidents of nearly every German *Land*, numerous ministers from Austria, Hungary and some Balkan states, many ministers of culture from

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German *Länder*, representatives from the world of science, noteworthy Goethe specialists (from abroad as well), representatives of the central government, of the army, navy and parliament had taken their places on the stage." And the President of the Goethe society, Julius Peterson, the Berlin University professor of German literature (a Nazi smypathizer) proclaimed: It is not without anxiety that we face a new century which announces itself in apocalyptic signs. Hope, however, can free us from the prison of the present. Inspired by it the Poet bursts open the gates to the future and strides before us into the darkness." And at the same evening (and in the same mood), Walter von Molo had the impudence to refer to the festivity in Weimar as "an hour of the *Volksgemeinschaft*" and to characterize "the entire German people as Goethe's family." While official Germany, either unsuspecting or conspiratorially and without shame, betrays and buries everything Goethe stood for, within the left opposition the tragi-comedy between Social Democrats and Communists is repeated once again. In the Communist Party magazine *Der Rote Aufbau* of July 1, 1932 one reads that "the unprecedented Goethe cult" has also seized Social Democracy, whose leadership, "that petty bourgeoisie drilled in prep schools and universities representing the elite of social fascism," has no idea what Goethe represents. Of course, quite the opposite is true for the Communists, who maintained: "he is *ours*; as dialectical artist, as the greatest linguistic creator of the world of form and content which finds its home today in the upper reaches of cultural history's spiral development — in the highest achievements of proletarian revolutionary literature." Hardly consistent with Carl Sternheim's statement of ten years earlier appearing in the left-wing radical journal *Aktion*: "we no longer understand Goethe's thought nor poets like him. We need once and for all a different artistic quality. The bourgeoisie can keep Goethe!" But did the bourgeoisie want him? Not Alfred Krupp anyway, who let his cultivated bourgeois facade down in a private letter written shortly before his death in 1887: "I ask neither Goethe nor any other man in the world what is right; I know myself what is right and I place no one so high that he might know better. Goethe may have been a great philosopher . . . that hardly concerns me . . . "

Enough of attempts to make Goethe into a positive or negative cultural hero; enough of attempts to find a substitute religion in his work. Geothe as helpmate for one's personal life, Goethe as model, as an inexhaustible source of quotes for daily life, with Goethe through the year, hour by hour? Goethe deserves more than to be treated merely as a miracle cure in the healing business of alienated mass culture — or, worse yet — as a symptom of the bourgeois world's malaise. In view of such rites of invocation one is tempted to say that one can indeed also live without Goethe. At any rate he is not to be saved by ultramodern theater productions, political or religious programmatic explanations, or diligent philology. But in this searching and fumbling around Goethe, in this absence of an historical literary consciousness which other West European nations possess, one should find perhaps an indication as to what Goethe could mean today. Perhaps he should serve as an inducement to reflect on authentic tradition and the reasons for its absence in one's own cultural life, and perhaps we should utilize this day in order to occupy ourselves with a Goethe who points to the problematic of modern alienated man. Not in the sense of a cure, but as critical reflection. And I believe that this is the manner in which one must approach Goethe. Discussion about the lack of a seamless system, of the contradictory nature of Goethe, is of course one of the conventions of the secondary literature; sometimes it is criticized and at other times praised. From my political perspective Goethe appears as a negative philospher of history, as a critic with relevance for today, who touched the nerve points of that modern

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society which, justly or unjustly, we still refer to as bourgeois.

The history of critical consciousness in Germany is inconceivable without Goethe. His entire life work is a denial of a closed system, of final answers. As he lets his cosmopolitan view roam over continents and historical epochs he frees himself from the "pain" of any ethnocentric residue . . . German but more than German, European but more than European; herald and model of a democratic image of man, herald and partisan for a liberal philosophical anthropology of — in his own words — "the free trade in concepts and feelings," world citizen (one must pronounce the word slowly: *citizen of the world*), who demands the necessity of strong moral laws and principles for the "international community." Insofar as his work represents at the same time the only and last document through which German culture attempted to establish for itself a world tradition, Goethe reminds us of the never realized historical consciousness of the Germans. One could say perhaps that, viewed in the light of the present day situation, the Germans stand closer to America and its ultimate lack of a historical tradition than to any other civilization. The unmastered past — one of those popular catchwords used again and again to describe the German identity crisis of the last 25-40 years — is perhaps itself an essential feature of that which bourgeois society has become. It has not mastered its past but merely overcome it. It wants no tradition; yet while it refuses tradition it damages and endangers the life of the individual in whose very name it appears.

To clarify the discussion of this problem let me quote from the English historian J.H. Plumb's book *The Death of the Past*, 1969, where he states: "Unlike merchant, artisan or agrarian societies modern industrial society has no need for the past. Intellectually it is oriented not to preservation but to change, exploitation and consumption. The past therefore becomes a thing of curiosity, of nostalgia and sentimentality."

There is no reason not to take this diagnosis seriously. Had Goethe been able to read it I have no doubt he would have accepted it. It leads us to consideration of what Goethe already recognized in his time — and he was certainly not alone — that is, the nascent consumer and conformist society at which he directed his anger both privately and publicly. Although the concept could not have been his own, there is a dialectical structure in Goethe's critique of society. Goethe foresees what has been the dilemma of modern bourgeois society, in its timeless historicity, up to the present day: on the one hand a consumptive and conformist mode of behavior, a phony egalitarianism, which undermines nuance and prohibits individualism and idiosyncracy. On the other hand a false conception of subjectivity, of an individualism which does not comprehend the individual as constituting a demand for a solidary, moral and intellectual way of life with others, but rather as a private kingdom where one follows one's own ends. And in the under- or overestimation of what one really is there is at the same time the danger of losing one's self in mass society.

Around the 8th of August, 1797 Goethe writes in his autobiographical report *Reise in die Schweiz*, and in nearly the same words in a letter from Frankfurt to Karl August: "How odd that it has occurred to me just how the public of a large city actually lives; it lives in a constant frenzy of getting and spending. All forms of entertainment, even the theater, are meant for distraction, and the general inclination of the reading public towards newspapers and novels is due to the fact that the latter always, and the former mostly, add distraction to distraction." And in the letter to Karl August he adds that in Frankfurt people grumble about the extremely high cost of living, yet they continue to spend money to accumulate the very luxuries about which they complain.

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Goethe's relationship to Frankfurt was not without ambivalence. To be sure, he wrote that "we Frankfurt patricians have always considered ourselves the aristocracy's equal," and he denies that his elevation to the ranks of the nobility may have meant anything to him. At the same time he expresses himself in a somewhat unfriendly tone in a letter to Zeller, written in 1803, where he says: "the gentlement of Frankfurt value nothing but money." Nonetheless, Goethe himself is not beyond financial self-interest; in a letter to his acquaintance Friedrich von Luck dated June, 1822 he writes: "...as far as myself is concerned I tell you confidentially that I removed my assets from Frankfurt and gave up my rights as a citizen, in order to relieve myself of the burden of local taxes." Thus, the local patriotism of our fellow Frankfurter Goethe had its limits!

To return to more serious matters — who upon hearing of the "constant frenzy of getting and spending" would not be reminded of that famous passage in *Faust* where the individualist, seduced and rent by distraction, says:

> I stagger from desire to desire
> And in pleasure I yearn for desire.

Frenzy and distraction remain for Goethe in the realm of the fortuitous, of caprice and false subjectivity. This is not to say that the idea of synthesis, the concept of authentic individuality and humanity, is missing in Goethe. He is not far from Pascal's famous definition of authentic subjectivity when he speaks, shyly, of poetic production: "Poetry demands, indeed, it commands concentration and self-composure; it isolates the person against his will, it repeatedly forces itself upon him and in the wide, open world it is as uncomfortable as a faithful lover." Thus genuine isolation, for Goethe mediated through art, for Pascal through religious contemplation, is at the same time a way back to oneself, away from the world of distraction and captricious subjectivity.

William Wordsworth (as well as many others) shows an affinity with Goethe's and Pascal's critique of popular culture and its distraction. The opening lines of his sonnet, written in 1807, read like a poetic translation into English of the passages in Goethe's diaries and letters quoted above:

> The world is too much with us; late and soon,
> Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers:
> Little we see in nature that is ours...

Goethe saw a danger as well for the artist who falls victim to the hypertrophy and hubris of a self-reflecting narcissism. Referring to the style of correspondence exemplified by his literary predecessors Klopstock and Gleim, Goethe delivers the following warning in the 10th book of *Dichtung und Wahrheit*: "even the most excellent of persons lives ephemerally and leads only a most miserable existence if he is too introverted and lets the fullness of the outer world bypass him, where alone he could find nourishment for his growth and at the same time a measure thereof."

The bourgeois revolt in 18th century Germany — as distinct from those in Western Europe — had only the artist as spokesperson for an autonomous individuality. But in the course of the 19th century the artist begins to realize that the price for identification with a society which now openly invites him in can be exactly as high as the price of resistance. Indeed, there is concealed here a more serious danger to his individuality (precisely because it is more subtle). The artist has the inner freedom to declare war against a decaying social class with a clear conscience. Yet what sort of society is it which

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claims to work on behalf of its members, yet secretly is able to poison the work of the artist, to impose upon an artist of excellence its own criteria of excellence, the criteria of the market, forcing upon him consent and conformity? And this is due precisely to the fact that the social milieu appears to favor artistic autonomy.

It was already the case in Goethe's Germany that the artist could not be the most important spokesperson of his generation; he is forced into a defensive posture and must compete with what Goethe calls "the weak, sensitive and mawkish newer publications." Goethe is well aware of the literary traditions of other Western societies. He writes to Eckermann' "With him [Molière] there is nothing distorted, nothing artificial. He mastered the mores of his time; in contrast our Iffland and Kotzebue [i.e., representatives of popular culture in Goethe's time] let themselves be mastered by the mores of their time, and as a result they were their prisoners, their dependents. Molière chastised people by depicting them as they truly are."

The category which includes both conformism and false subjectivity is that of dilettantism, for Goethe an important concept. A letter speaks of an investigation into dilettantism, planned in collaboration with Schiller, as a "task of greatest importance." It is difficult at first to determine what is the cause of Goethe's intense interest. The sources suggest that it was meant as a critique of artists and artistic production not meeting high aesthetic standards. The fragmentary "Scheme of Dilettantism" worked out by both is limited to listing all the arts from poetry to dance, with a notation about the usefulness and harmfulness of each artistic practice, the latter being defined as lacking competence. Little is mentioned regarding "usefulness but under "harmfulness" we find expressions like "amusement," "sociability," "mediocrity," "conceptual emptiness," and "insipidity." It seems reasonable to interpret these negative concepts as specifications of "distraction," which for Goethe — as we have seen in the reports from Frankfurt — is the essential characteristic of the city dweller's need for relaxation. At the same time the charge of dilettantism refers to the would-be artist, the bungler, who convinces himself of being something special, yet is only one among many. Here too the connection between false subjectivity and mass culture becomes visible. This outbreak of anger against dilettantism becomes a critique of the sinking level of culture which is exemplified in secondrate so-called artistic practices.

The dialectical scheme presents itself again: bad generality, bad subjectivity and the counter-image of man developing in a context of authentic tradition and culture. This explains perhaps Goethe's puzzling words in a letter to Schiller dated June 22, 1799: "It is only now that I view with horror, after we have researched the matter thoroughly and have given a name to our brainchild, that artists, entrepreneurs, buyers and sellers and lovers of art have been completely drowned in dilettantism...When someday in the future we open the sluices it will result in the fiercest quarrels, for we shall inundate the whole lovely valley where the bunglers have so happily settled. Now since the main characteristic of the bungler is incorrigibility, and since especially our contemporary species is afflicted with bestial arrogance, they will cry that their settlements are spoiled and, when the water has subsided, will put everything back together agian like ants after a downpour. But nothing can be done about it — let there be a mighty deluge!" (We know that unfortunately things turned out differently!).

Goethe was inclined to render this piece on dilettantism in poetic form. Thus it becomes even clearer that in Goethe's classical philosophical anthropology — as in Schiller — the genuinely artistic is equated with what is genuinely human and true. The beautiful is the good because it is the true. And it is true because it has been preserved and has proven itself in historical tradition, in an inherited cultural context. The dilet-

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tante is the opposite of the creative; dilettantism is in the last instance passivity incorporate which — as Goethe expresses it — "completely gives itself over to the material instead of mastering it." And he adds in his *Italienische Reise* that historical consciousness is the most important means for combatting dilettantism. "Anyone who is serious sees that in this area [art vs. dilettantism] no judgment is possible except if it is placed in the historical context of development." Critical historical consciousness is always with Goethe. He writes to Zelter on May 17, 1815: "The true can only be unfolded and preserved through its history, the false can only be debunked and dissolved through its history."

By now I have realized that despite my original intention my remarks have taken on the character of a ceremonial speech. Yet, on closer inspection Goethe succeeds in pronouncing in an exemplary fashion the afflictions of modern man: false collectivity, false subjectivity, and the defeat of the utopian idea of — in his words — the complete human being. Consonant with the concept of false subjectivity which I introduced earlier Goethe speaks of the "false striving of the individual who wishes to glorify himself." People produce slipshod work "without knowing it"..."Nowhere does one encounter a genuine striving to put the self in the background for the sake of the whole and for the matter at hand." This sounds at first as if it refers only to art and distraction, yet it concerns the world as a whole.

So I come back once again to my graduation essay whose theme, *Tasso* as a fragment of a great confession, I could adequately treat only today, more than sixty years later. By association with a book title of Rousseau Goethe plays a trick on us; actually his autobiographical epigram denotes just the opposite: against the sentimental, cultic outpour of feeling, against the orgy of irrational inwardness of self-centered individualism of Rousseau and his disciples, Goethe by implication teaches us that the work of art (as well as the man himself) must justify symbolically and actively its own specific subjectivity in the light of the whole, i.e., human society in all its contradictions throughout history.

Earlier I alluded to inwardness as an always present focus of disease of the German situation. I feel strengthened in my analysis when I find nearly the same expressions in Goethe. In a conversation with Eckermann on January 29, 1826 he says of an acquaintance: "he suffers from a common illness of today, from subjectivity." And he adds: "I would like to cure him of it." Critical consciousness has searched for two hundred years for a way of curing this illness, but it has not been found. The world has merely denied its existence. In his fine essay *Goethe's Concept of World Literature* Hans Joachim Schrimpf, in reporting on Goethe's critique of inwardness, observes astutely: "Goethe attacked those spreading tendencies which — as we can see today — had their fateful effect in the subsequent course of the 19th century and, as Goethe correctly predicted, far beyond the sphere of art on the social and political life of Germany." And I would add that up until the present day this has not changed. False subjectivity conceals itself behind many masks in modern society: in the competitive capitalist, in the pragmatic patriot, in the poet and novelist of the new inwardness who yearn nostalgically for soul and nature, and especially in the pretensions of the citizen who believes he owns his own secret, personal kingdom. Goethe said once in one of his maxims: "The Germans should avoid using the word 'Gemüt' for a period of thirty years, then perhaps 'Gemüt' would eventually re-appear." I believe that his *bon mot*, this educational advice, is by all means called for today.

A narrowed concept of self, of one's life, of one's conduct and philosophy of life, remain essential phenomena to be judged critically, for Goethe's time as well as our

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own. With subtle irony he speaks of how a subjective nature "has soon pre-empted its little inwardness." He says it in the same context where he speaks of the general illness of the contemporary period, of subjectivity. And he expands the discussion of this phenomenon, previously illustrated by reference to second-class poets, to the world-historical by adding, in a conversation with Eckermann on October 29, 1826: "all epochs in a state of regression and dissolution are subjective, in contrast all progressive epochs have an objective direction...our present time is a regressive one since it is a subjective one." And he closes with the following reflection: "On the other hand every competent endeavor turns from the inside out into the world, as you observe in all great epochs which were actually in a state of striving and progress and which were all of an objective nature." Against the hypothesis of the subjective he places the concept of experience. In speaking of himself he notes how what he achieved amounts to little to boast about, since he has merely gathered the experiences of other men: "I had nothing more to do than to help myself to the harvest which others had sown for me." This awareness of a historical context, which is constituted through personal history as critical re-experience of mankind's history, constitutes the most serious critique of the present day situation, as well as of his own time. Quite some revolutionary force is contained in a statement from the same conversation where he says "Basically we are all collective beings. For it is very little that we really own and are which we call in the strictest sense our own property." "Our property" — this central category of bourgeois, of capitalist society, is diametrically transformed by Goethe into a symbol of genuine subjectivity and at the same time of an authentic awareness of tradition.

As I arrived at this point of my reflections on Goethe's negative philosophy of history I began to have certain doubts. Is this critical attitude which I have attributed to Goethe actually a projection of my own position, that of critical theory to which I remain committed? I think not. It is certainly correct that Goethe was a member of bourgeois society. It is just as correct that he subjected this society to immanent criticism. It is senseless to speak of eternal values, but to make the past contemporary is not. And I agree with my late friend Theodor Adorno when he said in an essay on Karl Kraus: "Despite all the talk to the contrary nothing has changed in the fundamental basis of bourgeois society." And it is this basis about which I have attempted to say a few words, this social conditioned, false and basically anarchic individualism which Goethe understood as firmly established in bourgeois society. In this sense Goethe the bourgeois is the great anti-bourgeois, the great nay-sayer. "Despite the immense literature which has been produced about Goethe" writes Benjamin in his encyclopedic essay on Goethe "the bourgeoisie has been able to make this superior mind serve its purposes only minimally — not to mention the questionable extent to which they have been able to explore his intentions. His entire work is full of reservations toward this class. And when he placed one of his sublime creations in this class he did it was a face turned the other way." As I began to work on Goethe in the late 1920s he appeared to me as the great representative of the rising bourgeoisie. The historical experiences of the last half century have helped me to understand Goethe also as a critic of bourgeois "progress."

Goethe's attack, as I have attempted to show, is directed at a false concept of individuality which is a key component of bourgeois — and especially German bourgeois — ideology, today as during Goethe's lifetime. When I spoke at the beginning of how Goethe commemorations always coincide with critical periods in German history, this holds for the present day as well. An enlightened world citizenry is needed more than ever for defining authentic membership in a nation, in a national culture

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and for community-oriented individuality. I find it moving that 50 years ago Thomas Mann in his Weimar address on the 100th anniversary of Goethe's death remembered the latter's dictum: "From the heights of reason life resembles a horrible sickness and the world a madhouse." Without a doubt, at that hour, the imminent hour of Weimar's demise, Thomas Mann remembered the metaphor of the sick society just as I remember at this hour Goethe's pronouncement on the modern sickness of false subjectivity. Only reason can guide human activity, and only critique could become the praxis of human solidarity in order to prevent Goethe's diagnosis from becoming a prognosis or, worse, a prophecy.

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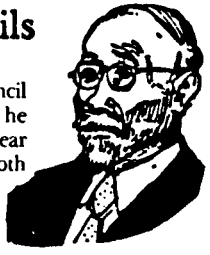

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REVIEW-SYMPOSIUM ON SOVIET-TYPE SOCIETIES

by

Tim Luke, G.L. Ulmen, Ivan Szelenyi,
Zygmunt Bauman, Gabor T. Rittersporn and Graeme Gill

Because of the growing debate concerning the nature of Soviet-type societies, a symposium-review was organized around two important recent books on the subject. The following are discussions of either one or both of the following volumes:

Ferenc Feher, Agnes Heller, Gyorgy Markus, *Dictatorship over Needs,* St. Martin's Press (New York, 1983).

Victor Zaslavsky, *The Neo-Stalinist State: Class, Ethnicity and Consensus in Soviet Society*, M.E. Sharpe, Inc. (New York, 1982).

Timothy W. Luke:

In social analysis, effective explanations alternate "thick description" with "thin description"[1] Zaslavsky's *The Neo-Stalinist State*[2] and Feher's, Heller's and Markus' *Dictatorship over Needs*[3], can be seen to track "actually existing socialism" down the respective paths of "thick" and "think" analysis. Taken together, they can be used to decode the political puzzles presented by Soviet-type regimes.

Zaslavsky's descriptions of the USSR's modes of institutional reproduction capture in "thick" detail the sources of elite privileges, working class support, cultural integration, ethnic co-optation, and social consensus in the post-Khrushchev era. The guiding metaphor here is "chaos," lurking just under the surface, which must be managed administratively either through the systematic application of terrorist coercion or the bureaucratic organization of consensus. Both techniques, once into operation, are uniquely Soviet. Here, Soviet bureaucratic centralism in the USSR and Eastern Europe is seen as creating a nearly "total atomization" of society, In this chaos, the regime organizes its minimum winning coalitions from divided, diverse fragments of social groups. According to Zaslavsky, however, the "systematic terror" of the "Stalinist state" has been displaced by new networks of "organized consensus" in the "neo-Stalinist state."

His "thick" analyses of social atomization in Soviet life institutionally illustrate how, "the neo-Stalinist state has organized new systems of stratification and new channels for upward social mobility. It uses various mechanisms of social control and regulation, such as the internal passport system, and creates privileged sectors and groups in society, such as 'closed' enterprises and certain territorial, occupational, and ethnic

1. Clifford Geetz, *The Interpretation of Culture* (New York, 1973), pp. 3-32.
2. Victor Zaslavsky, *The Neo-Stalinist State: Calss, Ethnicity, and Consensus in Soviet Society* (Armonk, New York, 1982).
3. Ferenc Feher, Agnes Heller and Gyory Markus, *Dictatorship Over Needs* (New York, 1983).

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groups. The neo-Stalinist state segments society by erecting a network of administrative barriers between these groups. It regulates mobility opportunities through bureaucratic restrictions and permits and through rules governing transfers from one social or territorial group to another."[4] Despite its shortcomings and inefficiencies, the neo-Stalinist state wins popular support, bureaucratic backing, and ethnic acceptance in organizing consensus out of chaos. The exaltation of Stalin, as the USSR's "Great Helmsman", and the expanded distribution of consumer goods, personal privileges, and social welfare services by the regime after 1964 makes this coercive code of compromise work. It survives because the alternatives are all far worse. Thus, as the leading figures in the Brezhnevite *nomenklatura* struggle "to consolidate and intensify the atomization of society, other social groups, unable to see different prospects or possibilities for opposition, accept this atomization in exchange for a few real or even illusory privileges."[5]

Feher's, Heller's and Markus' global overview of socialist political economy, Marxist theory, and the brutal administration of Eastern European regimes outline a "thin" description of the Soviet-style "dictatorship over needs." As as they admit, "our analysis does not claim to be *historical* in character, at least not in any sense of an accurate (or even a sketchy) chronicle. We have rather tried to understand the regime in its full-fledged 'mature' form."[6] The overriding theme of their text is "control,"suffusing the entire institutional make-up of Soviet society, which gains unending reinforcement in the labor forms, property holding, ideological discourse and economic exchange of everyday life. Soviet bureaucratic centralism in Eastern Europe and the USSR, from this vantage point, is understood as attaining a practically "total administration" of society. With this control, the regime hyper-rationally directs its planned society as a dictatorship over the needs of its dominated, dependent members.

Their "thin"theoretical treatment of the social administration of Soviet-style regimes, conceptually characterizes how "the dictatorship over needs," as a social formation, "is neither a novel, modified form of (state) capitalism, nor is it socialism — it is 'something else.' It is a social formation completely different from any that has existed in European or world history to date and it is equally different from any relevant conception in terms of which socialism, either 'scientifically' or in a utopian manner, has ever been conceived. Nor is this social formation a kind of transition between two states of social affairs, one existing (capitalism), and one not yet existing. It is a self-reproducing social order in which many elements declared to be 'transitory' (for reasons of camoflage) are constitutive of, and indispensible for, the functioning of the system . . . This is, then, a universal system, or at least a system that has universalistic aspirations, it is not a regional solution. Our attitude to the new formation is unambiguous. As a dictatorship over needs we consider it a value degradation, a demolition of the potentially free individual whose voluntary association would form an emancipated society, in the imagination ofMarx and every socialist. For us the dictatorship over needs is a historical dead-end despite its self-reproductive capacity."[7]

Even though the "dictatorship over needs" is not socialism, it is a powerful political response to the world capitalist system within many underdeveloped regions of the world — including the USSR and CMEA states. Despite its obvious composition as a historical dead-end, a degration of individual freedoms, and a failed socialist revolu-

4. Zaslavsky, *Neo-Stalinist State,* p. ix.
5. *Ibid.*, p 21.
6. Feher, Heller and Markus, *Dictatorship Over Needs*, p. xi.
7. *Ibid.*, p. 221.

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tion doomed from its beginnings, the dictatorship over needs has not only survived; it now is streamlining its internal logic.

Under Stalin's tyranny, the whims of the dictator, and "the apparent omnipotence" of his " 'hyper-rationalist predictive wisdom'," [8] frequently brought the system to the brink of catastrophe in the 1930s and 1940s. Likewise, the *apparatchiki* of Stalin's regime in the USSR and Eastern Europe were free to violate, "all forms of rationality, when they do not respect the slightest degree of relative independence of the individual and tend towards a veritable system of state slavery, when not even the physical self-reproduction of the individual is ensured, or when it is regularly endangered, then they collapse. It was not by chance that after Stalin's death three regimes driven far beyond the 'rational limit of oppression' — the East German, the Polish and the Hungarian — exploded within three years." [9]

Therefore, the inefficient, arbitrary dictators of these regimes have accepted the "post-Stalinist compromise" to rationalize their rule as a more administratively effective dictatorship. As Feher, Heller and Markus argue, this stategy is "the updating and 'streamlining' of the methods, principles and objectives of oppression. This has basically two aspects. The first is what we have otherwise repeatedly called 'post-Stalinist compromise' between governments and populations. The kernel of this compromise is the regular insuring of the very slow but steady rise in real incomes and living standards of the state subject on a 'normal' level (which means very reduced standards), the change from non-paternalistic (non-rewarding) oppression to a paternalistic one which rewards the individual by a guaranteed physical existence in exchange for freedom, social initiative and critical thinking. The second aspect is the transition from a system of indiscriminate collective mass exterminations of social (national) groups to a regular but selective persecution of genuine enemies of the regime (by which of course should be understood every independently and critically minded person). These are still standards of an oppressed and unliberated society but such as can (and regularly would) be tolerated by huge groups of population, given the face of an overwhelming inner and outer apparatus of oppression and the general lack of democratic traditions." [10] By co-opting the mass constituencies of the regime, and targeting its terroristic persecutions more accurately, the post-1953 communist party-state wins acceptance if not support from the larger population.

At this juncture, the "updated streamlining" of the dictatorship over needs meets the "organized consensus" of the neo-Stalinist state. Both interpretations of Soviet bureaucratic centralism, from both a "thick" and a "thin" analytical narrative, cast it as a uniquely Soviet/Eastern European phenomena that is an unprecedented, social formation *sui generis*. It is neither state capitalism nor state socialism, underdeveloped industrialism nor advanced informationalism, socialist in composition nor socialist in transition. Zaslavsky sees the neo-Stalinist state as a particularly regional development confined within the multinational USSR, while Feher, Heller and Markus envision the dictatorship over needs as a more general regime with universal aspirations worldwide. [11] It is this nexus in both the "thick" and the "thin" interpretations of Soviet-style regimes that needs great elaboration. That is, both analyses have not contextualized their presentations of Soviet-style bureaucratic centralism against the USSR's and

8. *Ibid.*, p. 261.
9. *Ibid.*, p. 262.
10. *Ibid.*
11. Zaslavsky, *Neo-Stalinist State*, pp. 130-164; and, Feher, Heller and Markus, *Dictatorship Over Needs*, pp. 221-236.

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Eastern Europe's unique positions in the global economy.

As analyses of the inner workings of Soviet bureaucratic centralism, Zaslavsky's *The Neo-Stalinist State* and Feher's, Heller's and Markus' *Dictatorship Over Needs* effectively indicate how the regime of "developed socialism" has evolved from Stalinism in the post-Khrushchev era. The arguments in both books suggest that a corporatist process of neotraditional cooptation and coercion has been mobilized by the *apparat* to split its opposition, reward its supporters, and maintain a semblance of national unity.[12] Yet, the success of these inner workings is contingent upon the regime's continuing provision of new collective goods — upward social mobility, a rising material standard of living, and special social privileges — to those diverse social groups that it administratively divides and rules. And, since 1964, the steady increase in these reserves of collective goods in bureaucratic centralist regimes has followed from their renunciation of an autarkic stategy of development in favor of dependent development within the capitalist world economy.[13]

The deformations induced in Soviet society under the Stalinist state and the destruction incurred during the Nazi invasion made it virtually impossible to develop an advanced industrial political economy after WWII. Thus, the neo-Stalinist state and its streamlined dictatorship over needs are a *product of* as well as an *adaptation to* the USSR's inability to make an autarkic-command transition to a political economy of advanced industrialism. Recognizing that Stalin's autarkic-command economy had to be left behind in favor of a partial re-integration into the world economic system as a semi-peripheral economy, the USSR's managerial and party elites worked to conceal this international premise in their model of a "developed socialist" political economy.

In this new model, Western expertise, industrial capital and foreign trade would be used to accelerate economic growth, compensating for the Soviet Union's underdevelopment. First, this new Western trade would be cemented into the political understandings of peaceful existence or détente as the means of readjusting the USSR's economy to the world economy. Second, trade in Western goods — food grains, steel products, electronic goods, transport equipment — would break immediate production bottlenecks, eliminate shortages and smooth material flows in the USSR and CMEA economies. And, third, technological transfers would be aimed in the long-run at building new factories, modernizing old industries and improving factor productivity in all economic sectors. While East-West trade and technological transfers expanded gradually after 1953, the decisive move towards expanded commerce largely developed from 1964 through 1984. As a new generation of producer and consumer goods from the advanced industrial Western economies took precedence in the state's development program, the material basis of the neo-Stalinist state was formed. A new emphasis upon electronics, consumer goods, computers, chemicals, weapons, automobiles, and energy technology provided streamlining for the dictatorship over needs. Furthermore, this shift toward dependent economic development was mixed with new military priorities, providing symbolic and material insurance

12. See Valerie Bunch, "The Political Economy of the Brezhnev Era. The Rise and Fall of Corporatism," *British Journal of Political Science,* 13, No. 2 (April 1983), pp. 129-158; and Kenneth Jowitt, "Soviet Neotraditionalism: The Political Corruption of a Leninist Regime," *Soviet Studies,* XXXV, No. 3 (July, 1983), pp. 275-297.

13. See Timothy W. Luke and Carl Boggs, "Soviet Subimperialism and the Crisis of Bureaucratic Centralism," *Studies in Comparative Communism*, XV (1982), pp. 95-124; Samir Amin, "Toward a Structural Crisis of World Capitalism," *Socialist Revolution* 23 (1975), pp. 7-44; and Immanuel Wallerstein, "Semi-Peripheral Countries and the Contemporary World Crisis," *Theory and Society* 3 (1976), pp. 461-483.

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against Western attempts to exploit Moscow's and CMEA's dependent position in the world economy. Expanded contact with the world economy necessarily entailed intensified police repression as well as a mythic revitalization of Stalinism and its autarkic economy in the Stalin cult.

The intra-party battles over "metal-eating" versus "chemicalized" industries under Khrushchev signals the birth of this new technologically-dependent model of socialist development. However, it is only with Brezhnev and Kosygin that such technological imports take off as a generally accepted strategem to pay for the neo-Stalinist state. As Nikolai Baibakov, head of Gosplan, wrote in the 9th Five-Year Plan, the major purpose of the USSR's entry into the world economy was "to ensure a substantial rise in the material and cultural standard of living on the basis of high rates of development of socialist production, a rise in production efficiency, scientific and technical progress, and a faster growth of labor productivity."[14] Likewise, Brezhnev argued at the 25th Congress in 1975 that in the Soviet economy, "the first order task remains the speeding up of scientific and technical progress."[15] While minor managerial improvements were made at the industrial enterprise and ministerial level, the major role in improving the technical performance of the Soviet economy was assigned to foreign trade and technology. Consequently, Breshnev also affirmed how vital foreign technology was to the USSR's economic development: "Like other states we strove to use the advantage provided by foreign economic ties to mobilize extra possibilities for the successful solution of economic tasks and to gain time to increase the efficiency of production and speed-up the progress of science and technology."[16]

In accessing these resources of foreign capital, expertise and technology, the Soviet leadership acknowledged the technological underdevelopment of the USSR as a "superpower." Because of its considerable military capabilities, the Soviet state did not have to subject its economy to the same technological, expertise and capital dependencies as Third World LDCs. Still, its formal integration into these resource networks through merchandise purchases, technological "invisibles," commercial financing, and industrial licenses still leaves key sectors of Soviet and Eastern European "developed socialism" dependent upon Western firms to improve both their output and productivity. These foreign dependencies also have sustained the political consensus. When withdrawn, as in Poland during 1980-1981, the social contract behind this "organized consensus" of neo-Stalinism had to be endorced by the military and police. Lacking the zlotys to guarantee more Zhigulis for the masses, Warsaw had to mobilize the ZOMOs merely to survive.

Foreign trade basically doubled from 1950 to 1955 and tripled from 1950 to 1957 in the USSR. By the time of Khruschev's ouster in 1964, foreign trade almost had doubled again. It expanded most rapidly, however, during the rise of the neo-Stalinist state after October 1964. While the 9th Five-Year Plan (1971-1975) projected a growth in foreign trade of 35 percent, it actually grew 186 percent. The annual growth rate from 1974 to 1980 in foreign trade was 21 percent.[18] Soviet trade with the West averaged under 20 percent of its total trade in the 1960s, but rose to 31 percent in the 1970s.[19]

14. Cited in Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, *Issues in East-West Economic Relations: A Compendium of Papers,* 95th Congress, 2nd Sess., 1979, p. 51.
15. *Ibid.*, p. 52.
16. Cited in Joint Economic Committee, U.S. Congress, *East-West Trade: The Prospects to 1985*, 97th Congress, 2nd Sess., 1982, p. 278.
18. Joint Economic Committee, *East-West Trade*, p. 367.
19. Joint Economic Committee, *Issues in East-West Economic Relations,* p. 53.

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Grains, meat and food products for the rising Soviet standard of living accounted for much of this trade, but 10-12 percent of all Soviet investment during the 1970s in new machinery and equipment was in technology of foreign origins. These imports were vital to a wide array of major industries and the rising national standards of material life. While the aggregate levels and total volume of trade in technological goods is low by Western standards, the impact of these technologies in many industries is critical. Chemicals, oil and gas, motor vehicles, tourism, computers, food processing, farm equipment and animal husbandry, all grew tremendously with this expanded Soviet trade in foreign technology.[20] Some estimates suggest that 15 percent of all industrial growth from 1968 to 1973 can be tied directly to Soviet imports of Western equipment.[21] These trends towards technologically intensified growth, based on new, systematically enlarged trade ties with the developed CECD states, are the ultimate foundation of the neo-Stalinist state's new mode of material co-optation and selective coercion.

Having made these practical concessions to the capitalist world economy, the expansion of Western imports since the mid-1950s fits into the long-run trends of building consensus in the neo-Stalinist state. Within the post-Khrushchev Soviet economy, qualitatively superior foreign inputs were used consciously as a strategy for inducing macroeconomic change and popular support. After 1964, the decreasing factor productivity of Soviet industry, inefficient agricultural production, and accessibility of Western technology, expertise and capital provided a pretext for even greater trade.[22] The USSR's leadership correctly judged in the 1960s and 1970s that Western businesses and governments both would promote Soviet trade and offer attractive financing. Likewise, the Soviet economy under the *apparat's* conservative, technocratic management could control Western imports. Dangerous moves toward reform from Western influence could be quashed, while Western consumer goods, food and expertise would satisfy the strong, domestic needs for expended mass consumption.

The organization of consensus and the streamlining of hyper-rational command economies in the CMEA states since 1964, then, has been contingent upon this entry into the global market as integral components of a capitalist world economy. In this respect, the *sui generis* nature of Soviet bureaucratic centralism might be less significant than the USSR's and Eastern Europe's dependent development as upwardly-mobile, semi-peripheral economies in the world economic system. This vital dimension is largely lacking in the analyses of Zaslavsky as well as Feher, Heller and Markus. In concentrating their attention on the peculiar inner workings of neo-Stalinist rule and its dictatorship over needs, the new importance of the USSR's and Eastern Europe's niche in the world economic system, as the basis for making these models of rule much more viable, is neglected.

Clearly, the USSR and Eastern Europe do not need the world economy simply to survive. The autarkic-command strategies of Stalinism effectively developed basic industries in both areas from 1928 to 1953. And, in the last analysis, bureaucratic centralism always can cut itself off from world trade and survive as an autarkic-command economy by employing Stalinist techniques of administration. Still, in the present, the industrial capital, commerical funding, and technological innovations, needed by the regime to sustain its "neo-Stalinist" state and streamline its dictatorhsip over needs,

20. Philip Hanson, *Trade and Technology in Soviet-Western Relations* (New York, 1981), pp. 133-139.
21. Joint Economic Committee, *Issues in East-West Economic Realtions*, p. 53.
22. Joint Economic Committee, *East-West Trade*, p. 279.

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are imported from the OECD economies. And, one can only fully understand how contemporary bureaucratic centralism operates, as a political and social regime, by examining its position in the international division of labor.

These dependencies are not a function of inferior Soviet scientific skill, inadequate theoretical preparation or technological inabilities. On the contrary, because of political constraints imposed on the economy by the dictatorship over needs, the USSR has not created the technical constituents of a modern industrial economy. Lacking the capability to develop many modern technologies from initial conception to eventual application, the USSR instead has concentrated on duplicating, scaling up and modifying basic designs borrowed from foreign sources. Hence, from 1964 to 1984, the Soviet systems in the USSR and CMEA have established comprehensive, systematic dependencies on foreign capital, expertise and technology to accelerate their domestic economic development. At the same time, the neo-Stalinist state guards against foreign subversion and domestic turmoil by expanding and rationalizing the scope of the political police, the Stalin cult, and socialist consumerism. This international perspective on the neo-Stalinist state reveals its short-term strengths and long-run weaknesses as an "underdeveloped superpower." Despite its tremendous military power, the Soviet Union today remains the world's largest and most powerful upwardly mobile, semi-peripheral economy — still heavily dependent on foreign capital, expertise and technology that it acquires after selling comparatively basic manufactures, semi-processed raw materials, and energy in the world market. The neo-Stalinist state, in turn, represents a "streamlined," if not logical economic and political adaptation to technological dependency in this mode of semi-peripheral development within the world capitalist system.

G. L. Ulmen:

Power creates its own body politic, even as it creates its own administrative apparatus and type of domination. Does it also create its own legitimacy? A power economy may not produce the calories of a consumer economy. But political and social stability can no more be measured adequately by the price of bread than by the barrel of a gun. The many and periodic Soviet economic failures have no more endangered political and social stability in the Soviet Union than have depressions and recessions in the United States. In the case of the United States, political and social stability is not primarily a question of power but of legitimacy. Is it only a question of power in the Soviet Union; or is political and social stability also a question of legitimacy? This is the central question raised by *Dictatorship over Needs* and *The Neo-Stalinist State.*

All political concepts and constructs are polemical in that they are focused on a specific conflict, bound to a concrete situation, and have a definite antagonist or group of antagonists in view. The titles of these two books are clearly polemical in that they are focused on Soviet-type society, bound to the "neo-Stalinist state" and addressed either explicitly or implicitly to Western leftists. The Feher-Heller-Markus volume attempts a "total understanding," which compensates for the fragmentary nature of Zaslavsky's essays; Zaslavsky's sociological concreteness compensates for some of the philosophical abstractness of the Feher group. The fact that all the authors are exiles not only from the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe but also from communism lends a certain unity of perspective. But these books are much more than political tracts of the ideologically

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disillusioned. Each in its own way attempts to come to grips with the present realities and future prospects of "real existing socialism" by considering the fundamental relation between domination and legitimacy. Not only do these categories recall Max Weber; both books are clearly indebted to Weber for their conceptual ammunition. The use of Weberian categories to criticize "Marxist" social and political structures is also polemical with respect to Marxism. Whatever lip service is still paid to Marx, Weber has come to serve where the ideological father of "real existing" and non-existing "socialism" was found wanting.

Weber's concept of domination envisions an administrative apparatus; the three principal types of legitimation correspond to different types of apparatus. Legal domination, traditional domination and charismatic domination all involve a reciprocal relation between the rulers and the ruled; the frequency of compliance is only one among other aspects of this relation. Equally important is the meaning both the rulers and the ruled attach to authority: the rulers claim legitimate authority to rule and the ruled recognize that this authority is legitimate by reason of law, tradition or charisma. None of these "ideal types"exists in reality in pure form. Domination is usually constituted of more than one type at any given time. Since the structures of domination vary in the ways in which power is distributed between the ruling minority and the apparatus, they vary also in the general principles of legitimacy whereby the "officials" obey the ruling minority and the people obey both. Thus, Weber's concept of legitimacy involves both the organization that implements and the beliefs that sustain a given system. If the ruled accept the "myth" created by the rulers to bolster their "legitimacy," then, no matter how this is effected, the power of the rulers is by definition "legitimate."

The Feher group traces Soviet development from the "negative legitimation" of "Lenin's Jacobinism," to the "charismatic legitimation" of Stalin's "terroristic totalitarianism," to the "traditional legitimation" of Stalin's successors, which is still "totalitarian" but constitutes a "compromise" between the state and the people. They write: "This transition has involved not only a movement away from a system of preventive mass terror to what is in practice a rather traditional form of oligarchic rule, but has also involved one from the most direct dictatorship over needs (connected with enforced industrialization and modernization at the expense of very large numbers of the population remaining in an abject poverty) to granting a degree of autonomy to individuals as consumers (together with the inclusion of a slow but steady rise of living standards into the global goal-function of the system)." This last, presumably *indirect* "dictatorship over needs" corresponds to what Zaslavsky calls the "neo-Stalinist state" with its similarly understood "compromise," which, as he writes, has effected "the transformation of the 'futuristic' nature of Soviet legitimation, when the rulers 'justify their rule and demand obedience in the name of an ideal society they are set on building,' into a legitimation based on popular consensus and acceptance of, or at least indifference to, the rulers' chosen course." All the authors emphasize the "continuity" and "stability" of the Soviet regime in this process of "political socialization" and recognize that one of the outstanding characteristics of the Soviet regime has been its "ability to reproduce basic economic, social and political relations under severely adverse external and internal conditions."

Zaslavsky's book is primarily concerned with the key questions of how "organized consensus" is achieved in Soviet society and how the essential features of the Stalinist system have been preserved "in a more modern and more pragmatic regime," i.e., how the Stalinist system has been "rationalized." He answers these questions by focus-

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ing on the structural and cultural aspects of the system and by analyzing its "accumulative, planning, legitimating and coercive functions." The two structural mechanisms contributing most to upward social mobility — higher education and territorial mobility — correspond to the two key mechanisms of social control, namely specialization and atomization. Although the economic consequences of the overproduction of specialists has led to a colossal expansion of bureaucratic personnel and of an unproductive strata, expecially in the "closed cities," the political consequences have been favorable to the regime in that it has increased administrative control over this expansive specialist class (which Zaslavsky calls the "middle class") at the same time that it has enhanced the loyalty of this class to the regime. Moreover, by erecting a network of administrative barriers between this class and other groups and sectors of society, the regime is able to regulate mobility and the rules governing transfers from one social or territorial group to another. By creating privilege "classes," groups and sectors within society, the Soviet regime controls all forms of social stratification and successfully "atomizes" all of society. Zaslavsky particularly mentions the significance of the army, the party, and "closed enterprises" in preserving the structure of power in Soviet society. All three institutions took their present shape during the Stalinist period and each "is carefully designed so that the entrance and the gradual advance of workers through them entails a corresponding increase both in control over thought and behavior and in rewards and benefits obtained, thus helping to forge new and stronger ties between the individual and the regime — ties that are all the stronger since they are not directly coercive." The upshot is that "the majority of the Soviet working class supports the present regime."

The most significant "cultural" aspect of the regime with which Zaslavsky is concerned is ideology; in particular, the "separation" of the political regime from its dominant ideology during the Brezhnev period. He writes: "Changes in the character of Soviet-Marxist ideology and its social functions, resulting in the adjustment of the ideology to the new conditions, are among the most important recent developments conducive to the increase in social stability." Since the idea of Communism has become generally discredited in the eyes of the Soviet population, the Brezhnev regime undertook to replace the ultimate ideological goal — the creation of a communist society — with the new concept of the "Soviet way of life," whose components include such notions as the leading role of the party, planned economy, full employment, a welfare state, the need to maintain ideological discipline, and the absence of individual freedom. Specifically, this concept introduced a new variant of the principle of "meritocracy," which accepts and justifies socioeconomic inequality. Thus Zaslavsky concludes that the Soviet political-economic system has demonstrated its definite developmental potential: "The regime's legitimation was successfully displaced from building an ideal society to achieving the 'Soviet way of life' as a realized ideal."

The chapter on "Ideology, Dogma, Culture" in *Dictatorship over Needs* supposedly utilizes as a frame of reference the "Marxian notion of ideology" rather than Weberian categories. But it is a Marxian notion in Weberian guise. The Feher group maintains that what is today called "Soviet ideology" is in fact no ideology at all but a dogma, even a doctrine. Attempting to ascertain the function of the "self-identification" of this doctrine with "science," they point out that it pretends to be rationally proven. More important is the fact that, since the founding fathers of Marxism could not possibly have foreseen the events of the twentieth century, the doctrine is left to the "interpretation" of the sovereign. In discussing the functions of the doctrine, the authors state the

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necessity "to reassess the notion of substantive rationality described in the first chapter [of their book] as an auxiliary form of legitimation. "But this auxiliary form of legitimation is not the main function of the system of dogma disguised as "substantive rationality"; its main function is "to totalize and control the society." In answer to the question: "To what extent, particularly or generally, is the society of substantive rationalism really rationalizable?". The Feher group contends that the Soviet system must pursue a course of rationalization in order to survive. Recalling the failed regimes of East Germany, Poland and Hungary, which after Stalin's death were driven beyond the "rational limit of oppression," they write: "It is simple to point out the primary channel of rationalization of dictatorship over needs: it is the up-dating and 'streamlining' of the methods, principles and objectives of oppression." Since the position of the direct producers has remained completely unchanged, "this was undoubtedly a case of adaptation to changes that were basically brought about by the very evolution of the given type of society."

Where the Zaslavsky volume is analytical, the Feher-group volume is descriptive: It is primarily concerned with defining a particular Soviet "type" of society, which the authors are at pains to distinguish both from the types of society conceived in the three major theories elaborated by Western leftists since the early 1930s — transitional society, state capitalism, and the "Asiatic" formation — and from their own "ideal type" of "socialism." The Feher-group's "model" of this new "type" of society is none too original. Their principal characterization has to do with the economic relations of Soviet-type societies "as being constituted by the corporate property of the apparatus of power over the objective means of social production incompletely divorced from its subjective factor (labor power itself)" and "the fundamental developmental tendency of these economies in terms of a reference to this apparatus as a corporate entity." Their characterization of the Asiatic mode of production, with which they often counterpose their characterization of Soviet society, is not only imprecise but incorrect.

But Karl A. Wittfogel, to whom the authors make critical reference, has never used such a designation for post-revolutionary Russia. Moreover, the authors trivialize the "Asiatic mode of production" as understood by Marx and Wittfogel by characterizing it as a theory of the "backwardness" of economic conditions, when in fact it has to do with structural-institutional relations. Their major argument concerning its non-comparability to Soviet society is that the latter is the "direct organizer of the production process itself." But Wittfogel pointed out precisely this aspect of the Asiatic mode of production in his 1931 book, Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft Chinas. In his chapter on the state as the "dominant agent" of agricultural production, he demonstrated that the state, through its regulation of the hydraulic installations, participated actively in the process of production. In 1967 Wittfogel spelled out more clearly his own and Marx's understanding of the role of the state in the economy of the "Asiatic" formation: "All governments fulfill a number of general functions. But according to Marx, certain governments go further. Universalizing observations made by the classical economists, he argued that 'All Asiatic governments' fulfilled a special 'economic function.' This function, which . . . was essential for the origin and maintainance of specific powers of production, gave the Oriental state its specific quality. That is, to use Marxist terminology once more, it was not a political 'superstructure' overlaying an economic 'foundation', but *an essential part of this foundation.* And its officials were not the political agents of social masters who controlled the means of production and the surplus produced with them. *They were themselves the masters.*" In *Oriental Despotism* Wittfogel pointed to the survivals or remnants of "semi-Asiatic" social and economic conditions at the time

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of the October Revolution, but recognized that the new power structure was far stronger than any previously known in history. In his analysis of Soviet society he utilized his own concept of a new type of state — a "managerial" state — and a new type of class — a ruling "monopoly bureaucracy" — which controlled and directed the means and process of production and appropriated the surplus value. It is Wittfogel who successfully joined the insights of Marx and Weber to conceive the new "type" of Soviet society. The Feher-group disputes the scholar whose theory they either knowingly or unknowingly appropriate. Like Wittfogel, they speak of "state slavery," reject the "socialist" pretentions of Soviet society but recognize certain affinites to socialist ideas and movements, point to its self-reproductive nature but consider it an "historical dead-end."

In the Feher group's dramatic sign-off in *Dictatorhsip over Needs* they refer to Weber's 1919 "letter to doom" to Georg Lukács warning that the Russian experiment "would bereave socialism of its reputation and authority for a hundred years" and add their own "most optimistic statement": "Of this hundred, sixty years have already elapsed." It reminds one of Shakespeare's most famous stage direction: "Exit, pursued by a bear." Soviet Russia's "real existing socialism" continues to track the ideal conception of "socialism" in the minds of the authors, which, not surprisingly, is sketched in only the vaguest of terms. Nevertheless, it is more in line with this residual hope that they see an oncoming crisis in "real existing socialism": "There is every reason to presuppose that a new and global crisis is again approaching in Eastern European societies — that the very consequences of the working of this system undermine the social basis on which its post-Stalinist stabilization has rested to date." Zaslavsky perceives a crisis in that the system of "organized consensus" began experiencing mounting pressures at the close of the Brezhnev regime. But he seems to believe that Brezhnev's successors will be able to solve this crisis by choosing the path of reform and the liberalization of economic life. The Feher group, however, perceives "an ever-growing cleavage between the official and the actual reality of economic life" which reveals the "deepening contradictions" of these economies and seems to point to a crisis which "in its intensity may well surpass the one following Stalin's death." But their own evidence of the "stability" and "self-reproductive" mechanism of Soviet society does not sustain this prediction.

More to the point is the Feher group's recognition of "the permanence of the legitimation crisis in Eastern Europe," due not only to the presence of an alternative image of an exemplary system of domination in the social fantasy of the population, but also to the incapability of the ruling strata to elaborate a meaningful and binding formula of self-legitimation and to the lack of a party to represent it publicly. Even though they rightly point out that "the types of legitimation in Eastern European countries can be conceived as miniaturized imitations of those in the Soviet Union, though in different sequences and variations," there is no doubt that this "legitimation crisis" does and probably will continue to exist. Legitimation in the Soviet Union, however, raises other questions.

Proceeding on the assumption that "charisma legitimates totalitarian systems when they cannot be legitimated by tradition," the Feher group suggests that "charismatic legitimation" became "obsolete" after World War II. Zaslavsky also refers to "the legitimacy the Soviet Union actually earned for itself by organizing the country to repel the Nazis." But the Feher group has in mind the "traditional legitimation" offered by the "continuity" of the Soviet regime. Presumably, it gradually appeared "natural" to Soviet leaders in the post-Stalin period to achieve "self-legitimation" by "tradition."

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Moreover: "Legitimation by tradition was more than self-legitimation, it became legitimation proper." But which "tradition"? The Feher group mentions that Stalin had begun to experiment with "re-introducing the idea of a nationalist Great Russia as an auxiliary form of legitimation" and identified himself with such figures as Ivan the Terrible and Peter the Great. From Marx's point of view, particularly as expressed in his articles on Russia in the London *Free Press* in 1857, this would constitute a direct identification with Russia's "Asiatic" tradition. The same could well be said of the "recent type of legitimation," which emphasizes the Russian nation and empire. But, as the Feher group points out, the greater emphasis today is on the Soviet "tradition," reflected in the campaign for the "Soviet way of life" examined by Zaslavsky.

The major significance of both *Dictatorship over Needs* and *The Neo-Stalinist State* is in demonstrating the "acceptance" of, "support" for, and /or acquiescence to the Soviet regime by the "overwhelming majority" of the Soviet population. But, quite aside from value judgments, the question still remains whether or not a dictatorship, and a totalitarian dictatorship at that, can be called "legitimate." The example of Hitler's "charismatic legitimacy" in Germany would seem to suggest that it can. But to characterize Stalin's "terroristic totalitarianism" as "charismatic legitimation" is a conceptual distortion. Moreover, the characterization of post-Stalin Russia as "traditional legitimation" is also a conceptual distortion. Both Zaslavsky and the Feher group emphasize that the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe are still living under "Stalin's shadow" and that Stalin's successors are careful to maintain their own and the Soviet regime's "continuity" with Stalin. It is, as the Feher group writes, "a carefully administered reminder to the population, relaying to them the unspoken but unmistakeable message that Stalin's ghost can always be regalvanized into life whenever necessary to protect the 'socialist achievements'." Zaslavsky refers to the "inertia of fear" in the neo-Stalinist system. While there is no denying the existence of a "Stalinist cult" in the Soviet union, nor of the genuine nationalist feelings of the Russian people, this "dictatorship over needs" or "neo-Stalinist state" can only achieve "legitimation" by intimidation. Forced "legitimation," whether implicit or explicit, whether disguised in "charismatic" or "traditional" trappings, is not "legitimation" in any sense that Weber understood. From the standpoint of power, it is "domination"; but the form requires a new category of "legitimation." Where the sociological father of "ideal types" is found wanting, perhaps Marx would come to serve. He would call it social "despotism," which is always forced because it presupposes total power and total control. Perhaps that new category should be called "forced legitimation."

Ivan Szelenyi:

The publication of the *Dictatorship over Needs* is an important event in two respects. First it is one of the more important books on Eastern Europe by East Europeans since *The Revolution Betrayed.*[1] Like *The Revolution Betrayed* in its time, the *Dictatorship over Needs* will change the Left's way of seeing the Soviet Union and "actually existing socialism." *Dictatorship over Needs* is of epoch-making significance in Western Marxist research on "real socialism." Second, this book is a major step toward a new critical theory. While critical theory, even after its significant revision by Habermas, remained a critique of "instrumental reason," of "formal rationality," Feher, Heller and Markus with their

1. Leon Trotsky, *The Revolution Betrayed* (New York, 1972).

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present accomplishment make a path-breaking step towards a new critical theory, toward the critique of "substantive rationality." The central element of critical theory was the dialectic of enlightenment. Now Heller, without questioning of course the negative dialectic of enlightenment, completes this project of radical critique of knowledge by the dialectic of de-enlightenment. The dialectics of modernity is now completed by the dialectics of post-modernity. It would be difficult to overestimate the contribution of Habermas to critical theory. Still Habermas, despite his major innovations, remained an "orthodox" critical theorist: he remained within the parameters set during the 1930s by the Frankfurt School. As in his reply to his critics in the *Habermas — Critical Debates,*[2] he acknowledges he really could not offer a coherent critical perspective on Soviet-type societies. Feher, Heller and Markus now reconstruct critical theory so that it will be critical both of Western capitalism and its Soviet negation.

The book is divided into three parts. The first, entitled "Economic and Social Structure" and written by Gyorgy Markus, is an attempt to develop a comprehensive critique of the political economy of Eastern Europe. The second, "Political Domination and its Consequences," was written by Agnes Heller and it is a new political sociology of Soviet-type societies. The third part, "The Functioning of the System: Conflicts and Perspectives," written by Ferenc Feher, is the most imaginative synthesis of the first two components, a comprehensive critique of "substantive rationality."

The central concept is dictatorship over needs. One has to read the whole book in order to have an understanding of what that means for the authors. The concept is developed in dialogue with the idea that needs are manipulated under market capitalism. While all three authors acknowledge that the manipulation of needs under capitalism is real, they remain within the Marxian critique of capitalism as a system of production which is oriented toward maximization of profits and not fulfillment of needs. Their central claim, on the other hand, is that the negative dialectic of de-enlightenment, the replacement of formal rationality by substantive rationality, produced something even worse, a dictatorship over needs. The "hyperrationality" of "substantive rationality" leads to a homogenization of society and a uniformity of needs. The apparatus that in Soviet-type societies replaced the capitalist class at the center of social domination imposes limits on need articulation and on the free satisfaction of needs. Though socialists dreamt of a system leading to a management of things, the Soviet system produced a management of the system of needs. Production for the sake of profit has been abolished, but it was replaced by production for production's sake, hardly an emancipatory step. In fact, they believe — at least Feher and Heller state this explicitly — that the step from the manipulation of needs to dictatorship over needs is a degradation, a step backward (p. 221).

The concept of the dictatorship over needs enables Feher, Heller and Markus to define what is distinct in their approach to Eastern Europe. Markus convincingly criticizes theories that regard Soviet-type societies as societies in transition between socialism and capitalism, as state capitalism, or as Asiatic formations. Markus also explicitly rejects attempts to explain the Soviet Union or Eastern Europe in terms of "backwardness" and insists that they are *modern* formations (p. 43). But being modern or non-capitalist does not mean they are socialist. Markus labels the Soviet Union pseudo-socialist, but does not really explain what this means. It is Feher who at great length argues why the term socialism is inadequate to characterize "real socialisms." He rejects the possibility of a value-free definition of socialism (p. 223). Socialism has

2. John B. Thompson and David Held, eds., *Habermas — Critical Debates* (Cambridge, 1982), p. 281.

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to be defined by values, like freedom, equality or the acquisition of the wealth of species by every individual, and not by structural characteristics (like abolishment of private ownership). To reject the socialist character of the Soviet Union is the "only socialist answer" according to Feher (p. 295) to the question of the nature of the Soviet Union. This is a politically respectable position, for, as Feher argues, as long as "the population accepts the term socialism as the correct self-description of the regime," the chances for a genuinely socialist transformation of these societies is slim indeed. (It is another question how convincing it is to define a social formation in terms of the values its ideologues share. This is hardly a materialist stand and cannot serve as a basis for "immanent critique" either!)

The theory of dictatorship over needs claims, therefore, that Soviet-type societies are neither capitalist nor socialist, and they are also not in transition between these two formations. They represent a new, unanticipated form of non-capitalist modernity. It is not difficult now to detect the real intellectual roots of this position. Though it is not formally acknowledged by the authors, their view concerning the nature of the Soviet Union is virtually identical to theories of bureaucratic collectivism. The influence of Carlo[3] and Castoriadis[4] is particularly obvious. Carlo's emphasis on "production for production's sake" as the source of the deformation of the Soviet Union immediately foreshadows the problematic of the dictatorship over needs. The critique of the Soviet growth mania by Castoriadis was probably another source of inspiration for the authors (though, unlike Castoriadis, Markus and Feher successfully distinguish the growth mania of substantive rationality from the growth compulsion of formal rationality).

Though the point of departure for Markus is undeniably the theory of bureaucratic collectivism, he immediately moves beyond it, especially with his critique of the bureaucratic class. Markus begins his critique of the political economy of the dictatorship over needs with the analysis of relations of ownership. Here he comes forward with an innovative solution. He claims that the owner of the means of production in Soviet-type economies is the apparatus of power as a corporate entity (p. 71). In this way he rejects the idea of a new bureaucratic class, for two reasons. First, he suggests that the apparatus is both a broader and narrower notion than the bureaucracy. There are bureaucrats who do not belong to the apparatus of power proper, while the apparatus may include members who are not bureaucrats (e.g., ideologue-intellectuals). Furthermore, the apparatus exercises power as a corporate entity. Thus, it is questionable whether its power is of a class nature at all. With the relations of ownership thus demystified, Markus now can proceed to unravel the secret of the mode of production of the dictatorship over needs. Since we know that the apparatus is the collective owner, we can understand the goal-function of this economic system. It is the maximization of the resources under the control of the apparatus.

Such an economic system should not be called a planned economy, Markus argues. Planning is based on the forecast of basic future alternatives in view of present-day exigencies and needs (p. 77). The apparatus, on the other hand, does not orient itself towards needs. On the contrary, it exercises a dictatorship over needs; it limits and oppresses needs. The resulting economy should be called a command economy, which is the opposite of a planned economy. This is again reminiscent of Carlo's distinction between bureaucratic and democratic planning. Indeed, it appears that what

3. Antonio Carlo, "The Socio-economic Nature of the USSR," *Telos*, 21 (Fall 1974), pp. 2-86.

4. Castoriadis, "The Social Regime in Russia," *Telos*, 36 (Winter 1978-79).

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Markus would accept as a "genuine" system of planning would be planning without planners. Both Markus and Feher acknowledge that in the struggle against the command economy, market-oriented reform plays an emancipatory role. But they both claim that such emancipatory potentials are strictly limited (p. 93 and p. 278). The real task, therefore, is to transcend both bureaucratic planning and the market. Unfortunately, they say very little about the third alternative. Should it be planning without planners (and how is that possible?) or rather self-management (and what would that mean at the level of the national economy?).

Although Markus' analysis is not particularly strong in indicating the possible characteristics of such a third alternative to bureaucratic and market coordination of the economy, it still offers critical insights into the functioning of the command economy. He demystifies the substantive rationality by which the apparatus legitimates its rights to be in command by showing how it is directly responsible for the malfunctioning of the economic system. As Feher points out in his synthesis: the goal function of the economy of the dictatorship over needs was defined by Markus in such a way that "it necessarily entails an unresolvable contradiction specifically from the point of view of rationality. The objective 'goal of production' implies, on the one hand, a constant effort to increase the material wealth of society . . . while on the other hand, this can only happen in ways which ensure the increasing power of disposition of the apparatus over this material wealth" (p. 243). Thus, the claim of the apparatus to "substantive rationality" creates a new rationality crisis. If Marx's critique of the political economy of capitalism provided a key to the understanding of the first rationality crisis, Markus' analysis may be the key to this second one.

With such a grounding in the political economy of Soviet-type societies, Markus now turns to the analysis of their social structure. At great length, he argues that the Marxian notion of class is not applicable to these societies (as, of course, it is not applicable anywhere outside the capitalist mode of production). When he comes to a positive characterization of the social structure, he becomes hesitant. He calls the members of the apparatus the "ruling group" (though, of course, the term group is as inadequate as any other concept to describe hundreds of thousands of members of the Soviet apparatus). He acknowledges that according to his own logic, the term working class should not be used either (p. 125) and though in his analysis of political economy he often referred to "direct producers" or "productive workers," now he is inclined to call them just "groups of workers." This is not only colorless terminology, but also dubious in light of the struggles of the Polish working class. Is it believable that there is a working class in the United States but only a "group of workers" in Poland?

The political motives behind his objection to a class analysis of Eastern Europe are respectable. He believes that Eastern European social structure can be better described with a multi-dimensional scheme (he follows Ossowski's moderately critical approach here). But such a multidimensional system of social inequalities offers hope that the various and divergent social pressures and resistances coalesce into one enormous social explosion against the apparatus as a whole. The Polish opposition ideology of "society" vs. "power" is clearly detectable behind this scenario. Broad-based, grass-roots social movements, not class struggle, are the vehicles of social emancipation in Eastern Europe. This is an attractive political scenario indeed (and not only for Eastern Europe, but also for the West).

Markus, on the other hand, is hesitant in his conclusions. He does acknowledge that "if one uses the concept of class in its broader . . . relational-correlative sense, there are good reasons for regarding Soviet-type societies as a new form of class societies. . . .

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There are deep structural tendencies in these societies due to which a dichotomous opposition of interests is constantly reproduced between the corporate ruling group and the unorganized and amorphous grouping of direct producers." This is a confession one ought to expect from Markus after he spent 100 pages on the analysis of the system of economic reproduction and its contradictions in Soviet-type economies. He also acknowledges that "at the time of recurring overall social crisis . . . this great division between the two classes suddenly becomes crystal clear" (p. 127). But he also concludes that the "class of direct producers" thus organized will attract "the overwhelming support or at least sympathy from the whole population" and, therefore, "the crisis can be overcome only with the assistance of foreign troops" (p. 127).

This conclusion is again very close to Polish opposition ideology. There, too, the whole population was against power, people against a principle. Events in Poland cast doubts on the validity of this abstraction. As it turned out, on December 13, 1981, there were more bodies behind power than anticipated, and the divisions within the "whole population" were also greater than hoped for. Though I find Markus' vision of the whole society joining forces in grass-roots social movements against the apparatus an ideologically attractive position, I have doubts about its accuracy in describing the actual social dynamics in these societies.

In the second part of the book, Agnes Heller explores the emerging new rationality crisis in the sphere of social domination. This is a wonderful original analysis: Heller is at her best. The analysis begins with an exploration of the nature of the regime's legitimacy. Heller claims to limit her analysis to the Soviet Union, since she believes that East European societies are in a permanent legitimation crisis. According to her, for a social system to have legitimacy, it is necessary to have at least a significant minority that believes in the principles of legitimation and a non-believing majority unable to provide an alternative. According to Heller, in countries like Hungary, Poland or Czechoslovakia, the "number of subjects who legitimate the system is very small," and the "majority of the population does have an image of an alternative political order — that of the Western European and North American liberal-legal state" (pp. 138-139). This is a reasonable argument, though Heller may have overgeneralized her conclusions. She is undoubtedly right in seeing a legitimation crisis in Poland, but it is doubtful whether this analysis can be extended to Hungary. It may be useful to distinguish between legitimation problem and legitimation crisis to capture the striking differences between Poland and Hungary. With Hungarian pragmatism, "socialist" values also lost their credibility and the emerging value vacuum can become the basis of a legitimation crisis. But for now, the term "crisis" sounds inflated in describing a regime that enjoys more popular support than any "real socialism" ever did in history.

More importantly, Heller scrutinizes the changing nature of legitimacy in the Soviet Union. She regards the Leninist epoch a Jacobin dictatorship that did not, however, succeed in securing its own legitimacy. It is Stalin who succeeded in creating the first legitimate domination in the Soviet Union, and he based this on his charisma. With his death, a legitimation crisis developed in the Soviet Union. Stalin's autocratic rule was replaced by an oligarchic rule of the collective leadership and this required abandonment of the charismatic legitimacy. Khrushchev attempted to base the new system of legitimacy on substantive rationality. In so doing, he was going back to the 1920s, when a possibility also existed to base Soviet power on substantive rationality. But that was blocked by Stalin's rise to power. Substantive rationality became a myth (p. 144) and under the autocratic rule an "auxiliary form of legitimation" came about that only

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complemented the dominant charismatic one. According to Heller, Khrushchev also failed and the system that finally emerged with post-Stalinist collective leadership is based on "traditional legitimation." Heller refers to the resistance to de-Stalinization as evidence of traditional legitimation: the system has to have continuity and cannot undermine its own legitimacy. Further evidence is Soviet conservatism, and the rule by the gerontocracy.

This analysis of legitimation and political rule is supplemented with a brilliant section on ideology. Heller challenges the view that Marxism is a Soviet ideology. Ideology, after all, is a system of thought that expresses class interests while pretending to be a universal world view. In contrast to this, Soviet ideology pretends to express class interests while in fact it expresses the interest of party sovereignty. The version of Marxism that became Soviet ideology is really a dogma. "This doctrine is called science and it is based on the work of the founding fathers, Marx and Engels. By claiming to be a science, the doctrine obviously pretends to be rationally proven. Science, however, can be falsified; moreover, social science is dependent on the time at which it was formulated. . . . This double character of science proved to be very useful in the Soviet system of dogma." This called for the need to interpret Marxism, and the monopoly of correct interpretation was claimed by the party leadership (pp. 188-189). Heller now acknowledges that "the prerogative of the sovereign in the interpretation of the 'only true science' is identical with self-legitimation through substantive rationality." But she does not think that it is sufficient to claim that legitimacy therefore is based on substantive rationality. "This prerogative, howver, transformed ideology into a system of dogma and that is why substantive rationality itself became *unreal, a myth*" (p. 193; emphasis added).

Such a rule by dogma leads to what Heller calls de-enlightenment. While enlightenment is "humankind's release from its self-incurred tutelage, de-enlightenment means a relapse into the same tutelage" (p. 195). "If enlightenment requires that one should reflect before acting,. . . de-enlightenment requires that one should never reflect, but unhesitatingly obey the party." Though Heller seems to be losing her irony when writing about enlightenment proper and she misses the negativity of its dialectics described by Horkheimer and Adorno, it is still clear that the scientism of instrumental reason in enlightenment is replaced by the scientism of substantive rationality in de-enlightenment. Or, in other words, the negative dialectic of de-enlightenment produces the fetishism of "substantive rationality." I would prefer the term post-modernity to describe the process Heller attempts to capture by means of the concept of de-enlightenment.

This is an exciting analysis, but not without problems. First of all, it does not seem that Heller has a strong enough case to dismiss the claim that legitimacy is based on substantive rationality. Second, it is unclear that the post-Stalinist epoch is based on traditional legitimacy. Heller's main argument concerning why substantive rationality is only auxiliary and not the primary base of legitimacy is that it became "unreal"; it became a myth.

Of course, she is perfectly correct in claiming that "substantive rationality" is a myth and, as Markus and Feher abundantly document, it produces extreme irrationalities. But this is not enough to doubt that legitimacy can be based on it. After all, Weber has a more ironic view about legitimacy than Heller. For Weber, the creation of myths is the central mechanism of legitimation: "Every highly privileged group develops the myth of its natural . . . superiority. Under conditions of stable distribution of power . . . that

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myth is accepted by the negatively privileged strata."[5] Is the "Leninist tradition" as the tradition of the party's "heroic past" and on which the assumed traditional legitimacy is based not itself a myth? And, furthermore, is "instrumental rationality" and the fetishistic world view corresponding to it not a myth as well? I would claim that all legitimation processes are always the creation of myths. The creation of legitimacy is always about maintenance of domination, not about emancipation. If I can refer once more to Horkheimer and Adorno:[6] they captured the negative dialectics of enlightenment exactly in terms of the process whereby enlightenment, initially a project of emancipation, was transformed into an instrument of social domination.

Furthermore, there is some internal inconsistency in Heller's argument. If being a myth disqualifies substantive rationality as the primary base of legitimacy, why does that not disqualify it as an auxiliary principle? An auxiliary myth can be more of a myth? I like the idea that an empirical system of social domination can be described by dominant and auxiliary principles of legitimation. I am not entirely convinced by Heller why substantive rationality has to be "auxiliary" when "tradition" becomes "dominant."

Finally, Heller's insistence that substantive rationality is just auxiliary contradicts Feher. For Feher, the core of irrationality of the dictatorship over needs is based on the "hyperrationalist predictive wisdom" of substantive rationality. Substantive rationality did not simply become a myth, it was not merely deformed; from a certain critical perspective it is irrational by its very nature. Though the concept does not play such a central role in Markus' analysis, he also would not be able to describe the functioning of the economic system with reference to tradition. The goal function of the economy of dictatorship over needs is not a traditional function; it is legitimated by rationalist principles. Most importantly, the fact that Heller underplays the significance of substantive rationality is damaging for their whole project. Heller's willingness to forget the mythical nature of "instrumental rationality" weakens the link of their analysis with critical theory and her emphasis on the traditionalism of Soviet society misses its postmodern features. There is the danger that the project of the new critical theory simply degenerates into another theory of the Soviet Union as an Asiatic despotism or a feudal socialism.

Also unconvincing is the claim that the Soviet Union is legitimated by tradition. National tradition or the tradition of the political system does play a role in every society in creating legitimacy. This is true not just for the Soviet Union, but for the United States and all other countries as well. The fact that the Soviet Union was unable to carry out a radical de-Stalinization by means of a devastating self-criticism and sought to maintain at least the ruins of the sanctity of its past is not a good enough reason to believe that the dominant principle of legitimation is by new tradition. Traditional legitimation presumes the codification of a complex system of sacred traditions and, most importantly, of traditional ways of selection into power positions. Heller is right that there are forces pointing towards traditionalism in Soviet-type societies, but she has not made a strong enough case that traditionalism has already become the dominant trend.

To call the Soviet Union traditional authority is problematic for yet another reason. Feher defends Heller for using "antediluvian" categories by claiming that the Soviet Union has an antediluvian character. He also acknowledges that references to feudal socialism are not totally unjustified. Markus also notes that terms like "estate" may be

5. Max Weber, *Economy and Society* (Berkeley, 1978), vol. 2, p. 953.
6. Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno, *Dialectic of Enlightenment* (New York, 1982).

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more appropriate to describe the position of the "ruling group" than class. They both have a point. But Heller's chapters are almost an orgy of antediluvian categories. The Soviet union is under "traditional domination," Soviet rule is either "aristocratic" or "autocratic" or "oligarchic"; the Soviet state is "absolutist," etc. This terminology is used with admirable imagination, but it is unclear to what extent these categories are used as metaphors or are sufficiently reconstructed to meet the realities of a complex industrial society. This orgy of antediluvian categories also seems to clash with Markus' repeated claim that Soviet-type societies should be regarded as modern formations and cannot be explained in terms of their backwardness. (After all, Markus decided not to call his ruling group an estate or to label party officialdom "clergy," etc.)

I do not think I should write a separate evaluation of Feher's four chapters. I have already extensively used these. His contribution to the book is twofold: he is the synthesizer and he spells out some of the political and ideological implications of his co-authors' chapters. This is a major contribution. In many respects, he is the one who broadens the horizons of the book towards what I called the new critical theory.

Zygmunt Bauman:

There is one central message Feher, Heller and Markus hammer home with relentless patience and unyielding tenacity: The Soviet system is about control — an ever increasing, ideally total control. Control over bodies, control over souls. Control over the fashion in which men and women satisfy their needs. And control over what they feel there is to satisfy in the first place. It is by the drive to such a control that Feher, Heller and Markus explain the origin of the Soviet system. It is by the urge to maintain, extend or defend such a control that they account for the dynamics, or the stagnation, of the Soviet system. It is by the functional prerequisite of such a control that they define the logic or incongruity of the Soviet system.

In order to get their message through, Feher, Heller and Markus untiringly cut their way through a thicket of nostalgic hopes, inert images and culture-bound historicisms which tightly wrap the phenomenon under study, barring all insight into its uniqueness. Among the wrappings torn off and discarded are: a) lingering beliefs that the Soviet system is an unavoidable or adventitious deviation from the essentially socialist-oriented development — a distortion that in principle can be rectified — together with a whole family of kindred beliefs, all assuming the transient, incomplete, not-yet-defined character of the Soviet phenomenon, and all warranting the use of the socialist model as a frame of reference against which to plot the 'convergences' and 'divergences' of Soviet history; b) theories spawned by the tendency to subsume the new under the old, the bizarre under the familiar; the many portrayals of the Soviet system as a variation of an otherwise all-too-notorious tune, be it industrialization, modernization, or capitalism; c) theories that admit the 'horizontal' uniqueness of the Soviet system at the expense, however, of its 'vertical' singularity — in fact, another variety of the 'nothing-new-under-the-sun' syndrome, dissolving Soviet peculiarities in perpetuity of historical fate instead of the universality of modern trends.

From behind its many conceptual veils the Soviet phenomenon emerges as a system *sui generis*. A system which is not a version of something different than itself: neither a faulty socialism nor a mutant capitalism nor an emanation of the timeless Oriental

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mystery. A system which — remaining part and parcel of the modern world — sets for itself tasks no other system did. It is for these unorthodox tasks that this system has developed its unorthodox methods.

This is an utterly acceptable and desirable standpoint. Potentially, it puts an end to so many sterile, scholastic lines of investigation which contributed to the perpetual crisis of the theory of Soviet system: how far one can depart from equality, freedom, or equality and freedom and yet be an 'essentially' socialist society? How much irrationality can one feed into the economy and still remain an 'essentially' industrial society? How much chaos can be reconciled with an 'essentially' planning society? Which is the class who rules Soviet society? How did it disguise its ownership (surely, to rule one needs to own)?

These are gains, but not the only ones. It is precisely for the habit of searching for the historical and systemic connections where they could not be found that the genuine roots of the Soviet system dug deep in European history escaped the analyst's eye. Debunking the myths of the Soviet system as a supersession or alternative of capitalism, or a locally confined freak graft of Oriental despotism is the preliminary condition of coming to grips with the formidable issue of continuity between apparent idiosyncrasies of the Soviet system and some rather major social and cultural tendencies of modern Europe. This second, positive task has been confronted by the authors, above all, in Part II (see especially pp. 230 ff., where, however, the potentially central argument is curiously confined to the context of the 'backwardness' theory), but given a markedly less thorough treatment than the *pars destruens* of Soviet singularities.

Socialism was born as the counter-culture of capitalism. That is, it rallied to the defense of the values that capitalism legitimized and preached against those values capitalism illegitimately practiced: it sought a more generous supply of the first and elimination of the latter. Thus, socialism took capitalism up seriously on its promise of equality and hence objected against inequalities made inevitable by rendering property the principle of distribution. Socialism took capitalism up seriously on its promise of freedom and hence refused to accept the dependence of labor on those who command the conditions of its employment. Socialism took capitalism up seriously on its promise of fraternity and hence condemned the great divide between capital and labor for breeding exploitation, cruelty and rift instead. Socialism was in its inception the utopia of the bourgeois revolution developed to its radical extremes and turned into a critique of bourgeois reality. Or, rather, socialism was a bourgeois-inspired effort to vindicate and resuscitate the historical project the bourgeois revolution failed to fulfill.

In this sense, socialism was a legitimate offspring of the bourgeois revolution eager to continue the work the latter started but failed to complete. Its *moral* critique of capitalism was conducted in the name of the values this revolution promoted; and the moral critique of capitalism was the only way to keep these values alive.

Since Condorcet, the utopia of the bourgeois revolution has been married to the myth of the Age of Reason. Indeed, the two blended into one until, in the self-awareness of liberal capitalism, they became indistinguishable. The moral utopia of the revolution came to be seen as inextricably tied to the program of the Enlightenment; liberty, equality, fraternity as naturally belonging together with rationalism — each complementing and being complemented by the other, each able to survive only in the company of the other, each deriving its meaning from such company. *Historical* continuity between the Enlightenment and Revolution glossed over the issue of their *logical* compatibility. Such logical inconsistencies as may appear to the analyst do not

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reveal a fundamental flaw in the proejct; if anything, they are a challenge. It is up to them to prove the legitimacy of a marriage that has been already consummated and whose reality cannot be questioned. Thus, from its turbulent beginnings, capitalism inherited not one, but two utopias; or, rather, one utopia made of two parts which, however ill-fitting, had been presumed to belong to each other for better or worse.

The socialist utopia, defending the bourgeois promise against the capitalist practice, could not but incorporate the axiom of unity between reason and justice. It wished to solve the (by definition illusory) contradictions of their marriage where capitalism failed to do so. Socialism, which proudly adopted the title of 'scientific,' proclaimed exactly this intention. It took over the utopia of liberty, equality, and fraternity. And it supplemented it with the utopia of Enlightenment: this of a rational society. The utopia of a rational society envisages, of course, a society built and administered according to the precepts of reason. But what does this mean? First and foremost, it means the substitution of order for chaos. Design for spontaneity. Plan for anarchy. In other words: control. Control over nature and control over natural propensities of men and women. This central thrust of the rationalist utopia manifested itself in a number of ways. Some of them Feher, Heller and Markus list under an unduly biased name of the "negative utopia of capitalist industrialization": a tendency toward the central management of social affairs; a pressure toward total supervision of labor and subordination of labor to a comprehensive plan of social production; and a drive toward a universalistic economy, intolerant of all 'irrationality' identified with personal or group autonomy.

This is all true. The capitalist utopia blended moral precepts with the vision of an all-inclusive social order. In this utopia, order turned into a moral value, and moral perfection into an image of planned society. This is not, however, the whole truth. Perhaps, not even the most important part of the truth. The project of a rational society, of an orderly society, of an *ordered* society, meant more than anything else that the omnipotence of 'man as species' may and should be brought to fruition *against* the impotence of men and women as individuals; that this impotence of individual men and women to find the way of reason on their own is the paramount obstacle on the road to rational society; that individual men and women know not what is "their best interest" and if shown it, would not necessarily obey it; that individual men and women must, therefore, be molded and drilled in order to fit the demands of a rational society; that this job of molding and drilling must be done by people who know the commands of reason and are therefore competent to judge what is in "the best interest" of individual men and women.

The project of a rational society is, in other words, an idea of domination which sets itself goals no secular power dreamed of before. No secular power of the past viewed its activity as a moral crusade; none wished to interfere with or take responsibility for the way its subjects run their daily life. It is only the state legitimized by the utopia of a rational society that perceives of its task as that of a "pastoral power" (Foucault) — a power aimed at the cultivation of moral virtues and identifying morally virtuous conduct as behavior geared to the rational order of society.

The socialist critique charged capitalism with failure to implement both sides of the composite moral-rational utopia. Like the two sides of the utopia, the two themes of the socialist critique blended into one to the point of becoming virtually indistinguishable. From the standpoint of the socialist critique, capitalist reality was both morally wanting and irrational; power of this twin charge derived in its entirety from the moral-rational utopia which capitalism proclaimed and nourished.

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Thus, the moral utopia of a society of free and equal individuals had been thwarted by the private ownership of the means of production and the network of subordination it determined, while the utopia of a rational society was blighted by the market, competition, and all these *pouvoirs intermediaires* which pitted particularistic interests against interests of the society as a whole. The two charges fused into one; and so did their object — capitalism as total phenomenon, complete with private ownership, market, liberalism. Socialism posited itself as the legitimate and loyal heir of the bourgeois utopia, engaged in a life-and-death battle with its capitalist mutant.

Socialism did not invent new values; it did not create a new social utopia. On both accounts, socialism has been and still remains in debt to the bourgeois revolution. All themes of the socialist program had been introduced into European culture and explored long before socialism identified itself as a separate movement and set itself against the reality this culture had gestated.

The socialist diagnosis of the obstacles to the implementation of the original Enlightenment hopes of a just and rational society cannot be dismissed as a mere error of judgment. Indeed, market, liberalism, ownership, autonomous articulation of society, etc., stand in the way of a centrally planned society, comprehensive etatization of "pastoral power," or unconditional subordination of individual motives and actions to the needs of the system (however and by whomever defined). If the capitalist practice demonstrates what happens to an Enlightenment utopia when its implementation is contained and circumscribed by unanticipated "intermediary forces" the French Revolution wished but failed to annihilate, the socialist practice shows what happens when the constraining forces are removed or neutralized.

"Dictatorship over needs," the omnipotent state in full and constant control of the body and the spirit of its subjects, is the ambition and the tendency of pastoral power. The Soviet state is this tendency set free and this ambition coming closer than anywhere else to its fulfillment. The latter happens when pastoral power is loosed from its "capillary" deployment (typical of other modern societies) and undergoes etatization.[1]

To sum up: the Soviet system, without being a sequence to capitalism or an alternative form of industrial society, is nonetheless no freak or refractory event in European history. Its claims to the legacy of the Enlightenment or to the unfulfilled promises of the bourgeois revolution are neither pretentious nor grotesque. And thus it contains important lessons for the rest of the world.

First, when returned to its proper historical context, the Soviet system can be seen as a practical test of the limits of Enlightenment utopia. This utopia conceived of *social* rationality as resulting from the suppression of *individual* irrationalities; of the rule of

1. Konrad and Szelenyi, who made a powerful case on behalf of the universality of the above tendency, regrettably obscured their findings by confusing the system-analytical issue of the principle of domination ("tutelage complex," according to Donzelot; "therapeutic state," according to Kittrie; "dictatorship over needs," according to Feher *et al.*; "pastoral power," according to Foucault) with an empirical-sociological question of one social category, identifiable by its externally observable characteristics, playing the classical role of the "historical class" which promotes the associated transformations of society in pursuit of its collective interest. Having done so, Konrad and Szelenyi exposed their diagnosis to an easy criticism and virtually invited the readers to question the validity of the first issue by revealing the empirical unsupportability of the second (as Feher, Heller and Markus have very nearly done). The problem, however, is that the systemic principle of domination, as exemplified in the phenomenon of "pastoral power," is not an issue amenable to an analysis in traditional class terms. The tendency is not a work of a particular "historical class." The latter approach obscures rather than reveals the intricate mechanism of the process.

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reason and common interest as the outcome of elimination of private passions and particular interests. The history of the Soviet state can be viewed as a consistent effort to act on this assumption: to clear the way to "social" rationality of planned development through the destruction of autonomous civil society, paralyzing the market, prevention of articulation of group interests. This effort has not been entirely successful (as Feher, Heller and Markus abundantly show) but it did go further than any other society on record. The Soviet experience offers, therefore, important information about the limits of the tendency by no means confined to the territory of the Soviet state. A society that results from the suppression of individual autonomy and group interests is not only drab, dreary and oppressive: it is also wasteful and stagnant. In other words, the outcome of the suppresson of "irrationality" on the individual and group level is irrationality on the level of society. The Soviet experience settled the debate in favor of George Orwell and Aldous Huxley.

Second, precisely because the claims of the Soviet system to socialist legitimacy have considerable credibility, this system has turned into the main, perhaps clinching, argument against the credibility of the socialist utopia itself. Once the meaning of the Soviet experience has been interpreted in its true context, the hopes that there is some yet undisclosed mileage hidden in central planning, destruction of the market or centralization of the pastoral power, cannot be seriously entertained. As Feher, Heller and Markus demonstrate, the Soviet experience cannot be dismissed as inconclusive any longer. The present-day Soviet system is not a state on the way to something radically different: it is a complete system, in its own way reasonably equilibrated and viable, and certainly capable of perpetual self-reproduction. This realization marks the end of an era. The traditional socialist utopia, born as a counter-culture of capitalism and a revindication of the promises of the bourgeois revolution, has run its course as the "conscience" of the Western society, its self-critique and the directing force in its efforts at self-improvement.

Third, a full assessment of the Soviet experience leaves little doubt as to where the hopes and effort to rectify the salient defects of industrial society should not be located. Indeed the lesson is not altogether negative. On the positive side, it suggests the necessity to prevent the trends which the original rationalist utopia deemed to be conditions of a "good society." Properly understood, the Soviet experience provides a powerful argument not just against the socialist counter-culture, but also (perhaps above all) against the much wider and much better entrenched culture of rationalism which gestated it. The final form of the Soviet system puts back on the agenda some fundamental premises and values of rationalization and industrial society in general, thus far accepted on both sides of the great political divide, as once more debatable points.

Fourth, in one respect at least the Soviet lesson seems to be quite specific. It points approvingly to the theories of Touraine, Foucault or the new (and reformed — see his *City and the Grassroots*) Castells, as well as to the practice of the Polish *Solidarity*, as focusing on the central problems around which the new battles for the shape of the future will be increasingly concentrated. These are problems of the power of the state and grassroots autonomy; the capacity of social movements to generate new historical subjects; the possibility of making audible the voice of groups unaccommodated within the corporatist arrangement; folding back of the pastoral power and surveillance prerogatives of the state; and, finally, the problem of technology which makes solution of all these problems (and, indeed, the continuing exercise of old liberal-democratic checks and balances) *technically* impossible.

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Victor Zaslavsky's *The Neo-Stalinist State* can be seen first and foremost as filling just one, but a crucial, compartment of Feher, Heller and Markus' theoretical analysis with rich, novel and thoroughly researched substance. Zaslavsky's book is all about one topic: institutions operative in the self-reproduction of the Soviet system in general, and in the perpetuation of state control over individuals in particular. If Feher, Heller and Markus present the continuity and stability of the Soviet system as an accomplished fact, however puzzling and mysterious, Zaslavsky solves the mystery. His solution is original (most of the facts that back it have been unknown to the ordinary Soviet analyst), but has all the marks of being definitive. Point by point, Zaslavsky demonstrates how apparently unconnected aspects of the Soviet system share the function of "tension management" and "pattern maintenance," i.e., stave off the articulation of conflicting interests and reinforce the control of the state over its subjects. Among the issues that have been given a particularly novel and revealing treatment one must name: the use of Soviet patriotism and the presentation of international relations both in and outside the socialist bloc, the socializing role of the army, the role of "closed enterprises" and the function of restrictions imposed on residence and geographical mobility, the role of alcoholism, and the ingenius solution to the "national question."

A reading of Zaslavsky's book brings out a point that the other book did not make with sufficient force. Zaslavsky described native, indigenous institutions of the Soviet Union, which in most cases are unique to this one state, sometimes by definition non-transplantable. They are manifestly not the institutions of other "socialist states." One wonders to what extent the maturity of the system, namely a state when the system is able to reproduce itself by its own internal mechanisms, and hence amenability of the system to "systemic analysis," has been reached in the Soviet Union alone; and to what extent it is legitimate to engage in a "comparative study" of Soviet-type states, treating each member of the socialist bloc as a specimen of the same category and using cumulatively information drawn liberally from all countries in the bloc. After all, the development of the Soviet state as an uncontrived, self-enveloping process took place in the Soviet Union and in the Soviet Union alone. Everywhere else it was imposed in disregard to the local institutions and needs and kept to a large extent by an external force or its threat. It is a reasonable assumption, therefore, that the maturation of the socialist utopia into its Soviet form had not been set in motion nor shaped solely by the logic of the doctrine. True, the general features of the mature Soviet system had been validated in advance by the socialist utopia of justice-through-rationality. But only in conjunction with very special historical circumstance could such a utopia materialize into a complete social system.

This is to remind ourselves, if a reminder is needed, that in the last account it is not doctrines, but people, that make history.

Gabor T. Rittersporn:

1982 was a great year for Kremlinologists. Practically for the first time they made a forecast that came true. Kremlin-watchers had been speculating for some ten years that General Secretary Brezhnev must die some day and that he would have to be succeeded by someone.[1] In November 1982, Brezhnev really died at the age of 76 in a

1. Z.K. Brzezinski, "Who Will Succeed Brezhnev?" in *The New Leader,* March 19, 1973.

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country where male life expectancy does not exceed 62 years.[2].

Since some of these authorities already after some 20 months of Brezhnev's 18-year tenure had decreed that his regime was immobile and decaying,[3] their followers had every right to wait for his death to try to foresee what would happen afterward. So they kept forecasting the possible scenarios of succession, fixing their eyes on the cloudy peak of the Kremlin's Olympian heights or, in the best of cases, they attempted to figure out the hidden patterns of changes in the regional leaderships.[4] Everything had been ready for years for the great day when high priests and lower clerks could finally celebrate their *missa solemnis*. Some of them became so hypnotized by the cryptic messages under the pictures in the front page of *Pravda* and by some scraps of twelfth-hand Moscow gossip that they felt confident to convey details about top-secret, behind-the-scene intrigues of the Soviet regime — even though they eventually had to admit that they had no idea about the voting procedures of the Central Committee. At any rate, they had already revealed who did what before as well as at the decisive session which nominated Brezhnev's successor.[5]

It is not very helpful for an understanding of Soviet realities that this kind of Kremlinology is the main source of information and that its *problématique* and terminology dominate debates concerning some of the most important issues of our time. Fortunately, however, this is not the only way Soviet studies are carried out, even if there is no indication that the new school of Sovietology is about to gain widespread acceptance.

Victor Zaslavsky is a prominent representative of this new school. Instead of pontificating about the clumsy intentions of some hardly known Kremlin bosses whose public appearances, speeches and writings are rare and far between, he concentrates on the observation of the submerged part of that iceberg, on whose top the Moscow establishment does not measure much more than the height of Lenin's Mausoleum. According to his approach, an understanding of the general socio-economic context is the surest way towards an accurate account of the problems Soviet policy-makers are facing. Since for him policy-making is to influence and manipulate this context through state power, he does not deal with the institutions of the Soviet regime whose structure, evolution and workings are copiously described elsewhere. Thus, he has every right to claim in the title of his book to speak about the Soviet state. In fact, he deals with some of the most important issues this state is confronting and, to a large extent, also creating.

Notwithstanding its originality, Zaslavsky's work is closely related to that school of Soviet studies for which the analysis of the permanent interaction of socio-historical phenomena is the basic task of the trade, rather than guesswork about obscure Politburo members' idiosyncrasies. Just as Dostoevsky's fellow writers could claim of having come out of *The Overcoat* of Gogol, members of this new school have E.H. Carr's monumental *History of Soviet Russia* as a model for the new trend in Sovietology.[6] As for

2. M. Feshbach, "The Soviet Union: Population Trends and Dilemmas," in *Population Bulletin*, 1982, vol. 37, no. 3, p. 34.

3. R. Conquest, "Immobilism and Decay," in *Problems of Communism,* Sept.-Oct. 1966.

4. For a few examples from a vast literature, see, e.g., M. Rush, *Political Succession in the USSR* (New York, 1968); T.H. Rigby, "Soviet Leadership: Towards a Self-Stabilizing Oligarchy," in *Soviet Studies,* 1970, no. 2; G. Hodnett, "Succession Contingencies in the Soviet Union," in *Problems of Communism,* March-April 1975; J. Gilison, "New Factors of Stability in Soviet Collective Leadership," in *World Politics,* 1976, no. 4; T.H. Rigby, "The Soviet Regional Leadership: The Brezhnev Generation," in *Slavic Review,* 1981, no. 1.

5. *Der Spiegel*, 1982, no. 47, pp. 151-154.

6. Fifteen separate volumes, one in collaboration with R.W. Davis (London and New York,

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sociologists of the contemporary Soviet Union, their metier is still *in statu nascendi* and Zaslavsky is one of the founding fathers of the discipline.[7] There can be no question of meaningful research on Soviet society, unless sociologists in the USSR are allowed to scrutinize at least some aspects of their fellow countrymen's daily existence.[8] The art of foreign observers of Soviet social problems consists in the critical evaluation and careful secondary analysis of the selectively published and sometimes doctored data — all the more so since the purpose of the use they make of these materials is radically different from the aims of those who collected them.

Victor Zaslavsky is a superb practitioner of this art. His way of extracting information from his often more than laconic materials is reminiscent of the techniques that Soviet citizens have developed in order to obtain useful information from the official press. Yet, notwithstanding the fact that he is a former Soviet citizen, Zaslavsky does not trust his personal experiences too much. Instead of relying on his own reminiscences, he prefers to check his memory through a skillful use of sources. Thus, his work throws an entirely new light on Soviet realities — all the more so since it is centered around the crucial problem of social and political consensus whose dissolution is one of the major features of the system's evolution.

The time seems to have passed when, notwithstanding the cruelties of collectivization and the sufferings of the subsequent decades, peasant women reverently guarded Stalin's portrait in their prayer books, like the mother of the writer A. Zinoviev, who felt indebted to the regime which had made a professor, a factory director, an army colonel and three engineers out of six of her eleven children.[9] In 1933, almost 22 percent, i.e., more than 100,000 people, were former benchworkers among the administrators of Soviet industry who had been promoted between 1928 and 1932.[10] Industrialization and the expansion of the party and state apparatus more than quadrupled the number of white-collar jobs in less than 15 years: from 966,900 in 1926 to 3,972,100 in 1939.[11] The overwhelming majority of the beneficiaries of this growth did not differ too much from Mrs. Zinoviev's six sons in an epoch when no more than 8 percent of the country's formally educated specialists remained university graduates from pre-revolutionary times.[12]

But even at that time already, the mothers of peasants and workers had every reason to be apprehensive about the future of their children. In 1938, when workers and white-collar employees and their children constituted 33.5 percent and 16.7 percent of Soviet society respectively, 39.9 percent of students in institutions of higher education came from workers' origins against 42.2 percent of their school mates who had a white-

1951-1982). For a particularly shameful attempt to belittle Carr's importance, see N. Stone's article appearing a couple of weeks after the historian's death in the *London Review of Books,* January 20, 1983, pp. 5-8.

7. Among the first attempts at creating a sociology of contemporary Soviet socity, see, e.g., M. Matthews, *Class and Society in Soviet Russia* (London, 1972); W. Teckenberg, *Die soziale Struktur der sowjetischen Arbeiterklasse im internationalen Vergleich* (Munich and Vienna, 1977); M. Yanovitch, *Social and Economic Inequality in the Soviet Union* (White Plains, 1977); B. Kerblay, *La Société soviétique contemporaine* (Paris, 1978); C. Warshofsky Lapidus, *Women in Soviet Society* (Berkeley, 1978).

8. E.A. Weinberg, *The Development of Sociology in the Soviet Union* (London and Boston, 1974), pp. 2-11, 30-51.

9. A. Zinoviev, *My i Zapad* (Lausanne, 1981), pp. 8-9.

10. *Sostav rukovodiashchikh rabotnikov Soiuza SSR* (Moscow, 1936), pp. 18-19.

11. V.M. Selunskaia, ed., *Izmeneniia sotsial'noi struktury sovetskogo obshchestva,* vol. 2 (Moscow, 1979), p. 295.

12. *Industrializatsiia SSSR,* vol. 4, p. 270. university graduates of pre-revolutionary times numbered around 60,000 while the full number of graduated specialists was somewhat less than 800,000.

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collar background. At the same time, it must be noted that the statistical category of "employees" includes technical, managerial, scientific, cultural, administrative and political elites, while there was a drop of more than 10 percent in "working class representation" among Soviet students between 1933 and 1938.[13]

Having started or substantially advanced their social ascension during this very period of five tumultuous years, the overwhelming majority of national and regional leaders of the Brezhnev generation graduated from engineering universities.[14] Nevertheless, on average, the engineering profession came only in third place in surveys of occupational prestige among wartime Soviet refugees, behind that of the doctor and the scientist — notwithstanding the fact that the highly rated job of physicians was recognized as materially less rewarding than that of engineers. After a successful war, and irrespective of their high earnings, army officers were less esteemed by the refugees than rank-and-file workers or even accountants, while the population was seen as having less respect for party secretaries than for kolkhoz peasants or chairmen whose occupations were declared the least desirable.[15]

Whatever one might think about the representativeness of the opinion of these fugitives concerning professions that seem inseparable from their worst experiences with the system, it is noteworthy that their highest esteem went to trades symbolizing general humanitarian and intellectual values, and not to ones incarnating the regime's productivist and disciplinarian priorities. All the more so, since it is obvious that by the 1960s and 1970s the attitudes of the young generations had a marked tendency to drift toward the norms of the embitttered refugees of the 1940s.

The great majority of regional and city first party secretaries who had been promoted between 1950 and 1970 had an engineering education.[16] Yet, a series of surveys shows that the prestige and attractiveness of the engineering profession among the youth has eroded since the mid-1960s. It has been yielding its strong positions to creative intellectual occupations, especially in the sciences and the humanities, and to medicine, which have been already at the head of the list of most preferred jobs since the second half of the 1960s in large urban centers.[17] Today, even a prestigious engineering school like the Moscow Institute of Energy has problems filling its first classes with suitable students because of a fall of 20 percent in the number of applicants for entrance examination since 1975, which leaves less than two competitors for one place.[18] As for the adult population, in a typical industrial city, the general esteem of engineers is barely higher than that of the workers, less than that of white-collar employees and more than two times less than that of the "intelligentsia not occupied in

13. *Narodnoie khoziaistvo SSSR v 1979 g.* (Moscow, 1968),p. 8; P. Kim, ed., *Sovetskaia intelligentsiia* (Moscow, 1968), p. 190.

14. K. Bailes, *Technology and Society under Lenin and Stalin* (Princeton, 1978), p. 6; S. Fitzpatrick, *Education and Social Mobility in the Soviet Union 1921-1934* (Cambridge, Mass., 1979), pp. 245-249.

15. A. Inkeles, *Social Change in Soviet Russia* (Cambridge, Mass., 1968), pp. 194-204.

16. J.F. Hough, *Soviet Leadership in Transition* (Washington, 1980), pp. 141-142. About the increasing educational level of these officials during the same period see S. Bialer, *Stalin's Successors* (Cambridge, Mass., 1980), pp. 173-178.

17. See, e.g., V.V. Vozdinskaia, in G.V. Osipov *et al., Sotsial'nye problemy truda i proizvodstva* (Moscow-Warsaw, 1969), pp. 48-50; V.N. Shubkin, *Sotsiologicheskie opyty* (Moscow, 1970), pp. 191-201; M.H. Titam, *Vybor professii kak sotsial'naia problema* (Moscow, 1975), pp. 128-129, 144-145; V.V. Nikitenko *et al.,* in V.I. Laptev, ed., *Sovetskaia molodezh'* (Moscow, 1981), p. 42.

18. Kakoe popolnenie poluchili, *Pravda*, August 27, 1978, p. 3; V. Grigor'ev, *ibid.,* September 6, 1983, p. 3.

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production."[19]

In production and especially in the increasingly obvious desire to avoid it is to be found one of the main problems the regime is facing. The time has come when, notwithstanding the official discourse about the workers' state and the ostentatious presence of portraits of model representatives of the laboring masses on the front pages of the newspapers, secondary school graduates have a bad and in many cases even negative image of the most widespread blue-collar trades.[20] According to the results of 14 surveys undertaken in different cities and regions between 1967 and 1974, at that time 30.6 percent to 65 percent of school graduates wanted to enter higher education against 0.9 percent to 8.3 percent of their classmates who would have liked to obtain training in a vocational school.[21]

Nothing has improved since then. Youth continues to shun these schools which are on the way to becoming dead ends for the least able and most unfortunate pupils and even potential trouble spots for public security,[22] rather than being the places where the country's alleged ruling class is educated. This explains the alarm concerning the young generation's work ethos voiced at the highest forums, as well as attempts at school reform to make work more attractive to children and adolescents.[23] But it remains to be seen who will instruct them, since on the national average, many students of pedagogical institutes drop out before graduation while more than 10 percent of freshly graduated school teachers never occupy the positions to which they are assigned. In some regions, the percentage goes as high as 50 percent.[24]

The hope and attractiveness of elevation and integration in the institutional framework of a huge administrative and industrial apparatus constituted two of the main pillars of a possible consensus within Soviet society. They became seriously weakened during the last decades. The remarkable slowdown of social mobility is an obvious reason for this weakening and for the accompanying estrangement from the regime's loudly proclaimed values. In 1970, when 56.7 percent of Soviet citizens were workers and 22.6 percent "employees," their children constituted 37.1 percent and 54.4 percent of the freshmen respectively. Vigorous measures were subsequently taken which succeeded in boosting "working class presence" up to 47.3 percent among first-year students by 1979 and to curb the share of youth from white-collar families to 46.2 percent.[25]

It is not clear that this affirmative action does not endanger the regime's relations with important groups among its main beneficiaries. At the same time, it is far from

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19. B.A. Crushin, *et al., Massovaia informatsiia v sovetskom promyshlennom gorode* (Moscow, 1980), pp. 154-155.

20. Nikitenko, *op.cit.* To measure the deterioration of the situation, compare the results of this Kiev survey of 1975 with those of a Leningrad one taken about ten years earlier: cf. Vozdinskaiia, *op.cit.*

21. L.A. Aza *et al., Tsennostnye orientatsii rabochei molodezhi* (Kiev, 1978), p. 17.

22. L. Simkin *et al.* in *Pravda*, May 30, 1980, p. 3; A. Bulgakov, *ibid.*, October 27, 1980, p. 3; N. Chistiakov, *ibid.*, April 3, 1981, p. 3; editorials, *ibid.*, November 16, 1980, and October 23, 1983, p. 1.

23. See, e.g., the speeches of K. Chernenko and party veterans at the Central Committee meetings, *ibid.*, June 15, 1983, p. 3 and August 16, 1983, p. 2, as well as a Central Committee document, *ibid.*, January 4, 1984, pp. 1-2.

24. Editorials, *ibid.*, September 28, 1979, and June 3, 1982, p. 1; V. Baidak, *ibid.*, July 7, 1983, p. 3.

25. L. Ia. Rubina, *Sovetskoe studenchestvo* (Moscow, 1981), p. 61. In 1979, 61.8 percent of theSoviet population was considered to be of working class origin and 23.1 percent were considered "employees" and their families. Cf. *Narodnoe khoziaistvo. . . op.cit.*

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guaranteeing the access of young people from low social origins to the most prestigious occupations. The number of young scientists of worker origin in research institutes is less than the half of that of their colleagues coming from families headed by highly qualified specialists. As for the institutes of the Academy of Sciences, the most esteemed places according to occupational ratings, they hire more than five times as many young scholars from elite milieux than from worker backgrounds.[26]

The end of the "Soviet Dream" may be in sight. Fewer and fewer can hope to be rewarded according to the promises of the potential consensus of the past, within the boundaries of the system's official values. It is not surprising then that many people now try their chances very far from the channels of social mobility that the regime can offer, in individual entrepreneurship, in the flourishing "second economy."[27]

About a third of the Estonian population has its TV sets repaired by such part-time entrepreneurs, according to an official source that can be considered somewhat conservative. At the same time, the labor force of Estonia's state-owned household oriented service industry did not grow by more than 0.8 percent in 1981, against a 14.7 percent increase in the number of private craftsmen who took the pains to register with the authorities[28] (notwithstanding the difficulties of such a move). This enterprising fervor is about to capture many of those who had been considered most successful, according to the norms of a not-too-distant past. At any rate, it is difficult to interpret otherwise the strictures of *Pravda* against teachers, engineers and even researchers who are abandoning their jobs in order to make money in the tourist industry or by cultivating onions, on the fringes of or beyond the regime's institutions.[29]

It is in this perspective that one must evaluate the behavior of those whose occupations are the most prestigious in the eyes of the population — but especially for the youth, and in particular their attitude *vis-à-vis* key elements of the system, e.g., the party. Between 1967 and 1975, in two cities that, according to Soviet sociologists, are typically large and middle-size urban centers where more than 80 percent of the country's population lives, party representation among highly qualified specialists, intellectuals and artists declined almost by half.[30] This is a significant tendency, not only because the numerical growth of these groups[31] was not matched by an adequate increase in party membership, but also because the majority of new practitioners of these highly esteemed professions came from the privileged elite that should theoretically be the most responsive to the regime's requirements and values. On the other hand, this trend shows that a good deal of the attraction the most prestigious occu-

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26. M.N. Rutkevich *et al., Vysshaia shkola kak faktor izmeneniia struktury razvitogo sotsialistischeskogo obshchestva* (Moscow, 1978), p. 251. Of young scientists in ordinary research institutes, 21.1 percent are of worker origin whereas 57.1 percent come from families of specialists. In the institutes of the Academy of Sciences, the corresponding figures are 13.9 percent and 70.3 percent. In 1977, "specialists" constituted 9.9 percent of the Soviet labor force, according to Rubina, *op.cit.,* p. 42.

27. G. Grossman, "The 'Second Economy' of the USSR," *Problems of Communism,* Sept.-Oct. 1977; and by the same author, "Notes on the Illegal Private Economy and Corruption," *The Soviet Economy in a Time of Change* (JEC, Washington, 1979), pp. 834-955.

28. V. Rutgaizer, *et al., Pravda,* November 1, 1983, p. 3.

29. V. Artemenko, *ibid.,November 10, 1983, p. 3.*

30. *T.V. Riabushkin, et al., Sovetskaia sotsiologiia,* vol. 2 (Moscow, 1982), pp. 42, 49. The cities are Kazan' and Al'metevsk, where party saturation of the group of highly qualified specialists, intellectuals and artists fell respectively from 25.9 percent to 14.8 percent and from 54.5 percent to 21.4 percent.

31. The number of specialists with higher education more than doubled between 1965 and 1977 (*Narodnoe khoziaistvo. . ., op.cit.,* p. 407). As for "scientific workers," their number grew by a factor of 3.3 between 1960 and 1974 (Bialer, *op.cit.,* p. 172).

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pations exert on youth cannot be attributed to identification with official norms, but, rather, to the possibility that these trades seem to offer some hope of escaping the system's constraints while staying within the well-guarded borders of the Soviet Union.

And so we come back to fugitives and more particularly to Zaslavsky, whose research sheds considerable light on some central features of the evolution of the Soviet system. One can only hope that this kind of research will become more widespread in Soviet studies.

Graeme Gill:

Ever since the 1917 revolution, observers of the Soviet scene have been anxious to gain an understanding of the nature of the system which has developed in the USSR. The types of interpretative frameworks suggested have often told the reader as much about the ideological position of the author as they have about Soviet society and its political system, with the result that they have often generated more heat than light. Nevertheless, our understanding of Soviet-type systems would be much the poorer were it not for attempts at this type of fundamental socio-political analysis which seeks to come to grips with the basic forces at the heart of the Soviet structure. A recent book by a former Soviet sociologist now resident in Canada, Victor Zaslavsky,[1] is a worthy addition to this body of literature.

Through his title, Zaslavsky raises an issue which is at the heart of all of our attempts to understand the Soviet Union, the extent to which the existing system remains in its essentials unchanged from that forged by Stalin in the 1930s. This question, and the associated issue of the circumstances surrounding the rise of Stalin and the construction of the Stalinist system, is fundamental to our understanding both of the prospects for socialism through revolution of the Russian type and of the nature of socialism in an industrialized, centrally-planned economy. Zaslavsky's position is clear. He declares: "Thus for the past two decades Soviet society remained essentially the political-economic system first erected under Stalin, with the one important modification that the use of terror has diminished and changed in character. The Brezhnev period can be seen as an endeavor to rationalize Stalin's political-economic system while preserving its essential nature".

Soviet society under Brezhnev is thus seen as remaining essentially Stalinist, with the single exception of the change in the level and character of terror; "the fundamental structures of power have remained unchanged".[2] It is this change in the nature of terror, presumably, which labels the state neo-Stalinist rather than Stalinist. But how satisfactory is this characterization of the Soviet Union? Is the system sufficiently unchanged as to be still clearly Stalinist in nature? Or have the changes that have occurred been sufficiently major to warrant an interpretation of the Soviet system in terms other than Stalinist?

Intrinsic to such a discussion is an understanding of what is meant by "Stalinist" and, more particularly, a Stalinist political system. Although the meaning of this term is subject to widespread disagreement and controversy,[3] an interpretation of a Stalinist

1. Victor Zaslavsky, *The Neo-Stalinist State. Class, Ethnicity and Consensus in Soviet Society* (New York, M.E. Sharpe Inc., 1982).
2. *Ibid*, pp. 131 & 9.
3. For a stimulating discussion of some of the aspects of this question, see Robert C. Tucker (ed), *Stalinism. Essays in Historical Interpretation* (New York, W.W. Norton & Co., 1977).

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system in terms of the following constituent elements would probably gain a wide measure of general assett.[4] Such elements characterize what Bialer calls "the mature Stalinist system," in evidence in the Soviet Union after the end of the purges in the 1930s. The chief elements of such a system were:

(a) A system of all-pervasive, arbitrary mass terror. The key quality of this system was a very high level of uncertainty among all levels of the population, ranging from the ordinary rank-and-file worker up to the highest elites. The terror was arbitrary for all because no section of the populace was exempt from a well-justified fear of "administrative measures" being directed against them. Moreover it was not clear what had to be done to avoid being caught up in the terrorist web; even devout Stalinists found their devotion and loyalty sufficient to save them from the security organs. Terror became the normal type of relation between regime and populace and an on-going force within the regime itself. Reflected institutionally in the prominent role played by the security organs in many aspects of Soviet life during the 1940s, the terror did not need to be unleashed in the post-war period in the form in which it had existed in the latter half of the 1930s to remain a key facet of Soviet life. The uncertainty remained, and that was enough.

(b) The elimination of the institutional integrity of the major institutions of the society. The political arena was characterized by institutions which had lost all semblance of integrity and coherence. Formal provisions and regulations ceased to have any impact upon institutional functioning or performance. No longer were institutions characterized by clear, and sometimes discrete, spheres of responsibility and action, but were instead subject to what appeared to be arbitrary interventions from outside. The interventionist role of Stalin personally most clearly reflects the weakness of the institutional coherence and integrity of all the major social institutions, while the involvement of the police system in matters of economic construction and of internal party life underlines the inability of both party and state bodies to defend their vital interests. Indeed, a system was developed whereby responsibility was spread among institutions, leading to excessive overlapping, parallelism, competition, checking and mutual surveillance. Leading decision-making organs atrophied as Stalin decided major questions among informal cabals of cronies. A high level of uncertainty and ambiguity thus characterized institutional functioning under Stalinist rule.

(c) Personal dictatorship. One of the most important factors creating institutional uncertainty was the personal position of Stalin. Although Stalin did not personally decide all issues, he decided those questions which he chose to decide. Once Stalin had expressed a view on a particular issue, debate ceased and his view became orthodoxy; before he expressed a view, others were unwilling to make their positions clear with the result that a sense of drift was often evident in decision-making. But Stalin's involvement in issues was idiosyncratic and somewhat arbitrary. All major decisions were subject to his purview, but he was also likely to become involved in issues of less importance. His opinion was unassailable, and although in practice his wishes might be undermined in the implementation of a decision, they could never openly be challenged.

(d) Personalized legitimacy. Though the cult of Stalin, which came to dominate the ideological matrix of the regime, the legitimacy of political action and of the regime as a whole was focused in the person of Stalin. Individuals and institutions gained the

4. This builds on the interpretation in Swereyn Bialer, *Stalin's Successors. Leadership, stability and change in the Soviet Union* (Cambridge, CUP, 1980).

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authority to act only through their fulfilment of the will of Stalin.[5] It was Stalin who was the source of all inspiration and guidance, the guarantor of the bright future toward which the Soviet Union was moving and of the victory over those who sought to divert it from this path. As the guarantor of the future, Stalin was the basis upon which the legitimacy of the system rested.

(e) Mobilizational model of social and economic organization. This pattern was begun with the industrialization drive of the first Five Year Plan period, and although it appeared in a paler form in the post-war period, it remained the dominant mode of officially prescribed action. It involved an emphasis upon the need to devote all of society's energies to "attacking" the problems at hand. Management and administration were subordinated to the attempt to mobilize workers to storm the economic heights, to politicize all aspects of society and to involve them in the struggle to build socialism. In such a view there was no legitimate private sphere of activity.[6] The mass effort to build socialism was to be guided by a centralized planning process based in the party-state apparatus and exercising overall direction of the course of economic development. The planning process was to ensure the utilization of all resources in the most efficient fashion for achieving the regime's goals, which were directly related to the perceived need for the rapid development of heavy industry and of military strength.

(f) A conservative value system oriented towards preservation of the status quo. The values of the early Soviet period were revolutionary in nature. Directly associated with the transformation of society flowing from the 1917 revolution and the first Five Year Plan, they legitimized the overthrow of the old order and the creation of a new. In contrast, the values of the mature Stalinism of the post-war period were conservative in the extreme. Strong emphasis upon Russian nationalism, discipline, vigilance, hierarchy, inequality based on merit and conformity characterized an ideological milieu which justified an increasingly conservative regime. The internationalist, egalitarian and anti-authoritarian rhetoric of revolutionary Bolshevism succumbed to the status quo concerns of an entrenched system.

While these were the major constituent elements of the mature Stalinist system, it was the relation between them which constituted the essence of Stalinism. In some respects Stephen Cohen is correct when he refers to Stalinism as "excess";[7] Stalinism was characterized by all of these components in an exaggerated form. But what made most of these exaggerated, gave them the peculiar form they had and moulded the relation between them, was the system of mass terror.[8] It was the system of terror which robbed the institutional structures of their integrity and coherence; institutions could neither develop nor function in a regular fashion in an atmosphere of uncertainty when individuals were constantly anxious about their safety and the organizations in which they worked were unable to offer them any security. Stalin's personal dominance, legitimized by the cult, was reinforced by his personal control over the terror machine. From the "defenders of the revolution," the police apparatus became the enforcers of

5. In effect, by making Stalin the repository of legitimacy, the cult weakened the position of the party and justified the decimation of it in the purges. Hence the problem with Zaslavsky's view that the cult was a means of reinforcing the hegemonic position of the party apparatus. *Op cit.*, p. 8.

6. In practice, of course, some aspects of life could be privatized, but these were usually tied into the wider social enterprise. Private plots are a good instance of this.

7. Stephen Cohen, "Bolshevism and Stalinism," Tucker, *Op cit.*, p. 12.

8. Zaslavsky acknowledges the centrality of terror, but without recognizing the full implications of this. *Op cit.*, pp.vii & 130.

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Stalin's will. The mobilizational model too had its links with the system of terror. The police network, both in terms of official police functionaries and the web of civilian informers, was a major factor in the politicization of all spheres of life and the denial of a legitimate private sphere. It played a role in economic production generally through enforcement of labor discipline and Soviet "morality" as well as more immediately through the direction of the labor camp population which, through its physical labor, contributed to economic production in many spheres. And finally, the conservative value structure, with its emphasis in particular on nationalism, discipline and vigilance clearly reflected central concerns of the security apparatus.

The terror system pervaded all aspects of the mature Stalinist political system and shaped its contours, but it would be wrong to assume from this that the political system rested solely upon terror, coercion and fear. In all political systems coercion is an element in the obedience of the populace, and it was probably a larger element for the Stalinist system than for most others. But political systems need also to rest on some degree of popular consensus, of popular acceptance of the system's right to exist and of the rulers' right to rule. This was not absent in the Stalinist system. As Zaslavsky points out, social mobility provides an important medium for "embedding" individuals in the regime, and the Stalinist period was characterized by social mobility on an extraordinary scale. Such advancement clearly provided grounds for the widespread popular acceptance of the politico-socio-economic structure despite its arbitrariness and uncertainty. Nationalist and ideological elements would also have contributed to this. Measurement of the importance of such popular consenses compared with coercion-induced acceptance is of course impossible, if for no other reason than that they were probably important to different degrees for different groups in the population. But recognition of the role of consensus in the Stalinist system does not deny in any way the central part that terror had in the normal course of functioning of that political system.

What is the implication of the recognition of terror as an essential component element of the Stalinist system for our understanding of the nature of the post-Stalin USSR? Coercion and physical violence are still present in Soviet society, but the level has declined appreciably and the type of arbitrariness which prevailed under Stalin is no longer in evidence. Since Stalin's death the Soviet leadership has consciously eschewed terror as a method of government, preferring to use coercive measures selectively to meet particular situations; for example, worker unrest has on occasions been suppressed by brute force, as at Novocherkassk in 1962, and the dissident movement was crushed during the 1960s-1970s. But the use of such methods has been directed against particular sections of society acting in particular ways, not at society generally as under Stalin. While the increased emphasis on legality in the post-Stalin period has not been reflected in the emergence of a soundly-based legal sphere providing real guarantees for the populace, this period has witnessed the emergence of greater certainty for the individual citizen; the criteria for attracting KGB interest are now much more clear-cut and evident than they were at any time between 1928 and 1953. Perhaps the clearest reflection of the decline of terror is its absence from intra-elite struggle; in the 30 years since Stalin's death, the only members of the elite to have been killed as a result of losing out in a top level power struggle were Beria and a few of his supporters in 1953.

The removal of terror as a *modus operandi* of the regime has had significant implications for the way the regime itself has been structured and for the relation between regime and citizenry. It is in this latter area that Zaslavsky's book makes an important

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contribution. The basic argument of the book is that the post stalin leadership has constructed a "political compromise between the state and the people," (p. viii) with the former working at building a general consensus across groups in the population upon which its stability can rest. The terms of this "historic compromise" involved an exchange of popular acceptance of the existing structure for a guarantee that the low prices for basic foodstuffs and services would remain stable, that work would continue to be available, and that people would be free to seek individual ways to improve their living standards.[9] This amounted to a guaranteed improvement in the general standard of living, a promise which has been kept, despite some recent difficulties in this area.

But the state has not relied solely upon improved standards of living to woo the populace. It has sought to foster an "organized consensus" through the cultural processes of socialization and ideology development and the structural processes of social stratification and social mobility regulation. Zaslavsky opens his discussion of these cultural processes by examining what he sees to be the rebirth of the Stalin cult in the USSR. He shows how the re-emergence of the figure of Stalin onto the public scene, both through mass literature and more official channels, strikes a reponsive chord among wide sections of the Soviet population, and he suggests ways in which that image may buttress the legitimacy of the system in the public mind. But the effect of this sort of development merely reinforces the results of the effective operation of the principal socializing agents in Soviet society. It is with these agents that Zaslavsky is concerned in his reporting of the findings of an illicit survey undertaken among Soviet Geological workers to determine their attitudes towards the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. On the basis of the survey, he argues that the family plays little role in the transmission of political beliefs to the children of first generation workers,[10] and that the major factors leading to an acceptance of the regime and its message are personal service in the army, party membership, or employment in a closed enterprise. These were the things which most firmly "embedded" an individual in the regime because they involved opportunities for socialization and a certain degree of social mobility, for persuasion and reward. Trends of development within the ideological milieu strengthened the effects of these socializing agents by shaping the ideology as a support for the status quo. Through processes of what Zaslavsky calls ficticization and consolidation, the ideology develops in such a way as to inhibit the growth of class consciousness among the working class (and thereby to prevent the emergence of working class radicalism) and to confirm the middle class in their privileged position. It is this privileged position which Zaslavsky studies through the strucutral processes contributing to the organization of consensus.

Along with the guarantee of improved living standards for the population as a whole, the regime has also sought to reward special strategic groups in other ways. The disappearance of opportunities for widespread social mobility that has accompanied the consolidation of the class structure has meant that an important source of the

9. *Ibid.*, p. 133.

10. This view may be justified only in terms of the first generation family not transmitting beliefs central to the legitimation of the Soviet system. The view that the family plays little part in transmitting political beliefs in general not only flies in the face of much of the accepted wisdom on political socialization, but may not be consistent with Zaslavsky's suggestion (*Op cit.*, pp. 10-13) about the continued salience of the myth of the "good tsar." If this myth remained important in popular culture after 1917, it was presumably transported into the new era by the families of, among others, first generation workers. The only other likely channel of transmission was the elliptical echo of it in the Stalin cult of the 1930s and 1940s.

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generation of a pro-regime orientation among the Soviet populace in the 1930s and 1940s is no longer present. In Zaslavsky's view the regime has come to grips with this through the implementation of social closure. The basic mechanisms of social mobility are the acquisition of higher education and geographical relocation. But as Zaslavsky points out, the capacity to utilize these mechanisms is restricted by the imposition of administratively determined barriers, the effect of which is to impose a form of social closure upon the population as a whole.

The key mechanism in this process of social closure is the internal passport. All Soviet citizens with the exception of collective farmers must have an internal passport from age 16; collective farmers may apply for one from that age. Through this document and the associated residence regulations the authorities can, in theory, regulate internal migration within the USSR. Official approval must be gained for permanent relocation, and even for travel or an extended stay away from one's home. Most pressure for migration has been upon the larger cities, where job opportunities, educational and cultural facilities and general living standards greatly exceed those found in the smaller towns and in the countryside. But these larger cities are closed cities in the sense that limitations on their size imposed by administrative fiat severely restrict popular access to them, with the result that access can be and is controlled and regulated in a way which benefits that middle class/specialist section of the population which is found principally in these cities. Tertiary educational institutions are concentrated in these cities and because residents have much more ready access to them than nonresidents, middle class children in these cities are easily able to tap into the educational elevator, a fact which contributes substantially to status reproduction. Restricted access to the cities limits competition in the labor market for those with skills, with the result that those skilled workers in the cities enjoy a significant level of job protection.[11] Thus, in Zaslavsky's view the skilled workers, the specialists, benefit directly from the regime's measures enforcing social closure: residence in a closed city provides them with job security, access to educational and cultural facilities, an agreeable standard of life compared with their unskilled compatriots, and high status, all of which contribute to their ablity to reproduce themselves as a status group enjoying significant privileges in Soviet society.

Turning to another dimension of stratification in Soviet society, the ethnic factor, Zaslavsky shows how passport requirements and residence restrictions are used in a similar fashion to tie the local elite to Moscow. Residence restrictions are used to regulate the population balance of ethnic areas and to ensure a predominance of the local ethnic group in the most prestigious positions in the region.[12] By cementing the position of the ethnic middle class through this process of job protection and by enabling it to enjoy the benefits which characterize skilled workers and specialists as a whole in the closed cities discussed above, the regime creates a privileged stratum in the region whose position and perks rest upon the system of social closure employed by Moscow. They are thereby co-opted by the regime and presumably made somewhat more impervious to nationalist sentiments.

11. As Zaslavsky points out, the general labor shortage in the USSR means that the authorities frequently ignore passport and residence regulations to enable enterprises to gain the needed levels of unskilled workers. By gaining entry to a closed city in this way, unskilled workers can place their family's foot on the ladder of social mobility and improved lifestyle. *Op cit.*, pp. 143-147.

12. Zaslavsky cites the number of research institutes as an example of this. *Op cit.*, p. 113 Of course, the most prestigious positions are not always the most powerful. In discussing the ethnic question Zaslavsky's primary focus is on the elite, which he considers to be much more susceptible to nationalist appeals than the rank-and-file populace.

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Thus, Zaslavsky's main argument[13] is that the regime uses mechanisms of social closure as a means of enabling certain strategic groups in Soviet society to enjoy the benefits of social mobility and the life-style it brings while denying this to the population as a whole. The latter are presumably to be satisfied through the general increase in the standard of living. This is an ingenious argument and has a good deal of merit. However, it needs to be broadened in two ways. First, by taking account of the role of the party in this process, and second, by extending the argument to include the leading bureaucratic interests in society.

The party has long been recognized as the central institution of the Soviet political system. As the Constitution declares, the party is "the leading and guiding force" of Soviet society, the organization in which the major decisions are taken and which sets the tone for all spheres of Soviet life. But more important for our current purpose, the party has been an important avenue of social mobility. Throughout Soviet history, the gaining of party membership has been not only an important stepping stone to power and a more privileged lifestyle, but also a path many working class peasant youths have trod in their move from manual, lower status occupations into white collar, more prestigious positions.[14] For a long time party membership involved the almost automatic departure from the shop floor into administrative and managerial roles as the party's need for such personnel expanded with the changes flowing from the industrialization program. Heightened levels of recruitment of workers during the Brezhnev period added to the general emphasis upon the need for scientific management suggests that this process may be continuing.[15] If so, the party will still be acting as a vehicle for social mobility for at least part of the Soviet working class.

The party has always used its control over jobs, and the associated powers embodied in residence restrictions and passport regulations, to mold social mobility and structure the effects of social closure. From the outset of Soviet rule discriminatory practices were built into party recruitment patterns. What makes this more important now than it was under Stalin is the "historic compromise" with the populace flowing from the elimination of terror. One further aspect of this compromise, and one not evident under either Stalin or Khrushchev, should be mentioned. Not only is it an aspect of the compromise of fundamental significance for the structure of power of the regime, but it has significant ramifications for the characterization of the system as Stalinist. This relates to the attempt to win the positive support of the leading bureaucratic interests through increased regularization of participation of elite groups and institutions in the policy-making process.

13. There are many subordinate arguments in the book which are both stimulating and deserving of much more extended analysis than they can be given here.

14. The army has also been important in this way.

15. See figures in *Partiinaia zhizn'* 15, August 1983, p. 21 and the discussion of the early part of this period in T.H. Rigby, "Soviet Communist Party Membership Under Brezhnev," *Soviet Studies* xxviii, 3, July 1976, pp. 329-333. Along with the increased emphasis on worker recruitment has gone a dramatic improvement in the level of educational qualifications of party members during the Brezhnev period. (Part. zhizn', *Op cit.*, p. 22). This may reflect the fact that those recruited from the working class have been coming increasingly from the technologically advanced industries rather than more traditional areas. One aspect of Zaslavsky's argument is of interest here. He argues (pp. 147-151) that the over-production of specialists in the Soviet Union has led this group to become even more dependent upon and subservient to the regime than they were before because of heightened employment pressures. Party membership figures show that over the Brezhnev period, engineers and technical specialists have increased their profile in the party much more successfully than other white collar groups. This reflects not just the desire of this group to cement its position in the structure, but the party's desire to have increased participation by these professionals in its life.

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The attempts to increase the levels of popular support for and identification with the regime by improving living standards have been matched by an effort to provide the major elite and bureaucratic interests with a firmer stake in the system while at the same time utilizing their undoubted expertise. These groups had been denied a regular place in policy-making under Brezhnev's predecessors, and had therefore been hamstrung in their efforts to defend their interests against external attack. Under Brezhnev, with the emphasis on consensual government, these interests were admitted in a more regular fashion to the decision-making process. While the ultimate decision remained with the Politburo, leading elite groups were consulted on issues that touched on their expertise or their interests, and their views were given due consideration. Political leaders sought to win the agreement of elite groups on particular issues before implementing a decision, with the result that what almost amounted to a lowest common denominator politics prevailed throughout much of this period. In this way, the leading elite interests were locked into the political process in a way that they had never been before and which marked a stark contrast with the personal dictatorship characteristic of mature Stalinism. The politics of brokerage, consensus, accommodation and even compromise held sway. Although on various issues there were clearly winners and losers, the rules of the game seemed to be shifting towards a more bureaucratized structure of power characterized by a high level of institutional integrity and coherence and an emphasis upon scientific management and efficient administration.

The increased regularization in the elite political sphere was matched by an attempt to provide a greater sense of regularity of procedure at lower levels. The policy of "stability of cadres" was meant to eliminate the disruptive high levels of personnel turn-over and consequent cadre uncertainty that characterized Khrushchev's rule, while attempts to introduce greater stability in financial allocations and performance expectations were meant to provide a more certain environment for economic managers.[16] The rejection of Khrushchev's populism removed another sort of pressure from administrative staff, that of having to defend their backs against officially-induced public checking on and involvement in their work. An attempt was thus made to remove the uncertainty which had characterized the conditions of operation of bureaucrats at many levels, to regularize their involvement in the political process and thereby both enhance their actual role and significantly improve their conditions of work. The leadership under Brezhnev was thus concerned to build a more stable policy-making arena on top of a performance environment agreeable to major institutional forces in the society. The mollification of bureaucratic interests in this way was an important part of the "historic compromise."

The regime's search for organized consensus was thus certainly conducted through the sorts of processes Zaslavsky so ably analyses: general improvements in living standards, the creation of privileged sectors of the population and the regulation of social mobility. Underpinning all of these was the party. But the way the regime sought to satisfy society's major institutional interests clearly differentiates this period of Soviet history from those which precede it, and in particular the Stalinist phase. Indeed, the fact that the regime had to seek to organize this consensus reflects the elimination of the terror which was central to the Stalinist political system. We should, therefore, be very wary about accepting the characterization of the Soviet Union under Brezhnev as Stalinist in any form.

16. For a vigorous argument along these lines, see Valerie Bunce, "The Political Economy of the Brezhnev Era: The Rise and Fall of Corporatism, *British Journal of Political Science*, 13, 2, April 1983, pp. 129-158.

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Cornelius Castoriadis, *Crossroads in the Labyrinth*, Translation from the French by Kate Soper and Martin Ryle (MIT Press, Cambridge, 1984) 339 pages, $27.50.

In a political version of the old biological cliché "ontogeny recapitulates phylogeny" Cornelius Castoriadis seems to embody in his personal evolution fetal stages in the labor pains of the left since World War II. According to Dick Howard in the *The Marxian Legacy* Castoriadis was a youthful member of the Greek Communist Party where opposition to Stalinism lead him to Trotsky. After the war and the resistance he emerges in Paris studying philosophy and cuts his political teeth on the splits and schisms within the political fantasy world of the IV International. He founds *Socialisme ou Barbarie*, abandons Trotskyism, moves through the Western Marxist tradition and after more splits and more journals he ends up, after May 68, a practicing psychoanalyst. There may be a lesson in all this but I fear it is not what Howard calls Castoriadis' "logical steps." At any rate from the evidence Castoriadis seems to have combined criticism of bureaucracy, both West and East, with high revolutionary activism. One of the epigrammatic statements of this period, according to Howard, is "not to deduce the revolution but to make it." Apparently having failed as either the Euclid or Lenin of the post-war left Castoriadis' work marks a decided wane in revotionary enthusiasm. In fact the tone of this book is quaintly traditional. Not only is everything expressed in a kind of high German metaphysical diction but in a key essay Marx comes out a poor second to Aristotle on both economics and a theory of justice. This book, as its blurb announces, strives for profundity, to deal with "the deep philosophical issues raised by modern thought" and what is left of the old leftism is the encyclopedic range which demands that everything be subsumed under a single theoretical analysis.

Appropriate to his theme Castoriadis sets out in the preface the single topic of this collection of essays. "What is the soul — and to what extent, under what conditions, does psychoanalysis oblige us to think of it in a new way? What is language — and how is it to be spoken of? What is the object of mathematics, of physics, of biology, of the social-historical disciplines — and how does it simultaneously disclose itself to and conceal itself from this extraordinary undertaking, modern science? From what starting point, and by what terms, can we speak of economics, equality, justice, politics?" (p.x) Castoriadis concludes all of this by saying simply that he would like to throw light on the "strange fact of knowledge." I do not want to sound like I am defending a compartmentalization or professionalization of knowledge by doubting whether all these diverse and complex forms of knowledge are going to be subsumed under a single theoretical analysis. Though philosophers have traditionally treated science in this way, Castoriadis, for all his effort at criticism, never seems to question the deep philosophical project of finding a single source or basis for all knowledge. The very epistemological question of accounting for or explaining knowledge is loaded with metaphysical baggage. Further he seems to hold that if a single epistemological account is not possible then everything will fall into nihilistic skepticism, wreaking havok with both the sciences and society. There is no attention paid in this book to how Marxism, or its various critical variants, attached itself to the philosophical tradition and proclaimed for itself the authority that previous philosophers had dreamed of possessing. I think there is a political side to this desire to legislate to the sciences and disciplines from the lofty perspective of metaphysical or a priori certainty. But let me try to be more specific about these doubts concerning Castoriadis' overall project by looking at some examples of his analysis in the text.

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Castoriadis' collection of essays is essentially divided into two sections. The first is a long discussion of psychoanalysis and the second concerns the nature of modern science and what Castoriadis calls "technique," covering narrowly technology but encompassing all activities of making and doing. In the second half there is what I consider the strongest essay in the collection. "Value, Equality, Justice, Politics: From Marx to Aristotle and Aristotle to Us" is a carefully argued and insightful analysis of Marx's reading of Aristotle. Castoriadis shows the blindness in Marx's interpretation and shows how Marx failed to understand Aristotle's normative concepts of justice and equality. According to Castriadis Marx's naturalistic attitude caused him to misread Aristotle on economics and also assume that justice and equality would be the *natural* result of changes in the labor process. Concentrating on Marx's concept of homogeneous labor power Castoriadis shows why he considers it a theoretical error and connected to authoritarian political tendencies within Marxism. The essay might remind readers of Jean Baudrillard's discussion of how Marx uncritically privileges use value in his analysis of commoditites. Nevertheless, at least in this essay, Castoriadis proves himself a capable and penetrating critic of the political tradition in a prose that if not elegant is readable. I only wish the rest of the collection were up to this standard.

In another essay in the second section called "Technique" we have a development of similar themes on a broader scale. It concerns the well known themes of scientism and instrumental rationality. In these occasional essays Castoriadis shows a blindness of his own to vast amounts of relevant work. For example, in the essay "Technique," and at other points, Castoriadis discusses models of technology, information and energy conversion and their importance to economics (pp. 180-192). However he completely ignores the so-called "entropy theorists" such as Nicholas Georgescu-Roegen, Jeremy Riffkin, Hazel Henderson, or Howard Odum. I suggest them not because they are right or beyond criticism but because they constitute an important body of work on these themes and they have criticized traditional economics from this perspective. Such lack of specific analyses and cases give Castoriadis' authoritative pronouncements an empty ring. It seems to me his disregard of these thinkers is because they are not within the French intellectual scene (if I am correct that Castoriadis if aware of their work in economics). In both this discussion and his comments on philosophy of science Castoriadis seems blithely insular with regard to work in English. Thus in his essay "Modern Science and Philosophical Investigation" Castoriadis treats the doctrines of falsification and verification as the same position (pp. 174-175). This dates Castoriadis' readings since it represents a now discredited view of the history of positivism and treats Karl Popper's theory of falsification as a theory of meaning (like verification) which it is clearly not. I agree with Castoriadis that neither theory is adequate to give an account of science but if his criticism rests on such confusions his account falls far behind the recent attacks on both doctrines by Imre Lakatos or Paul Feyerabend, who are not discussed at all.

Leaving aside these shortcomings let me turn to the first part of the collection to consider the central thesis of the book. In the long discussion on psychoanalysis Castoriadis puts forward the view he also discusses in the natural sciences. Theories in sciences must be supplemented by what Castoriadis calls "elucidation." Elucidation turns out to be the activity of thinking itself, as that is a reaction to reductionism, scientism and the loss of moral or political meaning in the sciences. Here we have an attack on the basic dogmas of modernism, the fact-value split, the formal character of reasoning and the autonomy of scientific inquiry. The importance of psychoanalysis, I take it, is that it is in danger of falling into biological reductionism as it strives to become a

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science or falling into obscurantist philosophy if it resists reduction. Therefore for Castoriadis psycholanalysis is a test case for "elucidation" as continuous with inquiry. Psychoanalysis cannot fully instrumentalize its procedures. "The analyst lays claim to a certainty about what is to be done. In this way the subject (the analyst) is spared an experience which, given his formation by our particular society and history, would be lived as a risk and a source of anguish — the experience of having to manage. (We do not think we do 'science.' But furthermore; we do nothing, neither science nor anything else; we apply a technique — of experimentation, reasoning, inference, psychoanalysis.) From the point of view of the thing in itself, and this is a far graver matter, this leads to an evacuation of precisely those questions whose evacuation is imperiously required by the present institution of society; the questions of thinking and doing. To think: to *elucidate*, not to 'theorize.' Theory is only one moment of elucidation, and always lacunary and fragmentary . . . But logic and theorisation, although they are not mere 'instruments,' acquire meaning only through their immersion in an *activity of elucidation* which transcends them and cannot simply be subjected to their criteria" (p. 84).

How can we distribute the blame for such writing between the author and translator? The translation is atrocious. Those spots where Castoriadis is obviously striving for a kind of punchy, snappy prose it comes out as truncated, mind damanged English. But the fault is not entirely one of translation and I am personally tired of reviews which, in a self-congratualtory tone, reassert Quine's indeterminacy of translation thesis *ad nauseum*. Returning to the text, Castoriadis never clarifies what is the activity of elucidation. It seems to me to be simply good old criticism but apparently when you are writing about the lofty issues of modern thought you need far classier terms. The central argument of this passage is that making, doing and theorizing have been instrumentalized. We do not act; rather we react from pre-given schemata or techniques which we take over as given and without question. I am not sure that such is totally the case in the sciences where there are many examples of genuine theoretical innovation going against pre-given patterns. Also one might wonder how it would be possible to "do anything" without some schemata or pattern to follow. Many activities, from perception to moral reasoning, are only possible for human beings because of schematic patterns. That such schemas cause difficulties, in moral reasoning for example, is undoubtfully true but I would like a little more reasoning and little less assertiveness from Castoriadis about such complex points.

The illusion of automatic processes of reasoning in science results in "neutral objectivity." Consequently value questions are banished from the sciences and, as Castoriadis shows, this is a disaster for fields like psychoanalsysis. He will argue, as I said earlier, that the same criticism can be applied to physics. Since, unlike Castoriadis, I do not claim expertise in quantum physics I will discuss the case of psychoanalysis.

Freud attempted to build into psychoanalysis an acount of its reception by the general public. Freud took it that if the theory was correct then one should expect resistance to it on the part of the general public, as well as the scientific community. In his *General Introductory Lectures* Freud formulates the major tenet or hypothesis of psychoanalysis as holding that sexuality is the causative factor of nervous and mental disorders. He continues: "In my opinion, it is the aversion from this conclusion of psychoanalysic investigation that is the most significant course of opposition it has encountered. Are you curious to know how we ourselves account for this?" Freud goes on to outline the theory of repression and concludes; "The revelations of psychoanalysis are not tolerated by society and it would greatly prefer to brand them as

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aesthetically offensive, morally reprehensible or dangerous."

Though an interesting defense this is also a dangerous sytle of argument. It condemns critics by assuming the truth of the theory and identifying the critic with a category (neurotic) invented by the theory. It reminds one of Marxists who treat their critics as, by definition, the agents of reactionary politics, whether they intend that or not. But Freud was not that sophistical. He clarified his argument by saying that, "since some objections (the cultural ones) are not valid arguments against conclusions which claim to represent objective results of scientific investigations, the opposition must be translated into intellectual terms before it can be expressed." At least here Freud is giving a place to criticism, without identifying it first as neurotic, and only asking that psychoanalysis not be rejected simply on the grounds of cultural and social mores.

It is both odd and revealing that Freud's expectations were reversed. Whereas the theory had great success with the general public, even transforming everyday language, it never gained wide acceptance in the scientific community. The problem is, as Castoriadis argues, that psychoanalysis is a borderline discipline. The fact that therapy plays such a central role in both testing and formulating the theory would rank it within the medical disciplines. In fact, unlike France where lay analysts like Castoriadis are the rule, in the United States psychoanalysis is fully within and controlled by medical institutions and medical degrees.

Psychoanalysis doesn't quite fit into medicine, however, in part because of our modern reformulation of Aristotle's classification of the sciences. For Aristitle there is a distinction between theoretical, practical and poetical sciences. Aside from astronomy and mathematics which fall into the category of theoretical, the only practical science is politics and medicine is placed in the category of poetical or productive science along with crafts and art. The rise of modern science abolished the category of poetical science and treated the practical not as a separate discipline but as mere application of the only real science, the theoretical.

However the "scars" of this classification system live on in such areas as medicine and the social sciences. In this way Freud's theory seems gerrymandered. He took from medicine such concepts as therapy, cure and diagnosis while he modelled his discipline, at least initially, on biology where the mind is an organ functioning within the body. Thus, the discipline would naturally appear as neither fish nor fowl. Freud's cure is not really medical and the mind is not really biological organ. Thus the curious science seems weakest at the point of its claim to cure patients. Castoriadis calls therapy the "political" dimension of psychoanalysis. Freud realized this weakness and attempted to deal with the non-medical character of his new talking cure. He argued that there is no real competition between psychoanalysis and traditional organic medicine, nor do they both produce the same result, namely, health. Freud notes that patients expect to be cured in the usual sense because of resistance concerning their problem. The layman, Freud argues, treats neuroses as useless, unnecessary problems instead of well integrated aspects of character which exist for a reason. Thus one is "cured" only metaphorically and there is really no such thing as psychological health in the strictly medical sense.

Jacques Lacan, whom Castoriadis treats with unconealed contempt, represents both the danger and awareness of therapy as politics. Lacan's writings can be seen as a pedagogy designed to force the reader, student or patient out of any biological or medical interpretation of the analytic experience. His fascination with language and texts, coming from such influences as Heidegger, logic and information theory, is used ironically, not as an effort to think big thoughts but to poke analytic fun at intellec-

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tual constipation. On the other hand Lacan's antics and actions, as recently chronicled by Shirley Turkle in *Freud's French Revolution* or Stuart Schneidermann in *The Intellectual as Hero*, seems a drama of authoritarianism and neurotic hero worship on the part of followers, even if there is a hint of the Zen master dilemmas in what Lacan tended to do when interacting with others.

Castoriadis' assessment of this situation in psychoanalysis, though not specifically of Lacan, is that it represents the way in which historical conditions limit and distort theorizing. A recurring thesis in these essays is historicist argument about the relationship between theory and history. Castoriadis calls it the "social-historical metaphysics" behind the project of modern science. Castoriadis argues that capitalist society secretes a "magma" of imaginary social significations. The social imaginary structure, following the geographic metaphors he is fond of, is a kind of "mantle" over all theoretical activity, turning creativity into instrumentalism. How this happens and what these "significations" are, are questions difficult to answer because of prose like the following: "It takes us back to the entire Greco-Western universe . . . to the misrecognition, the occultation of the historicity and sociality of thought, correlatively, of the individual; to the occultation of the question of praxis and poesis; to the occultation of creation, whether this manifests itself in the radical imagination of the subject or in the social imaginary as *instituting* (and instituting, of course, logic itself and Reason itself). The profound paradox of the Freudian creation . . . is that it unveils and brings to light radical imagination, creative indetermination as the very element of the psyche, while, at the same time, caught up in the social-historical metaphysic, it remains subject to the illusion that it will one day be able to provide an exhaustive 'theory' of the psyche" (p. 83).

I will ignore confusions due to the grammatical terrorism of the translators which suggests they got Castoriadis' French into English by first putting it into Serbo-Croatian. Aside from that, the reader is confronted with a muddle of assertions in such passages, which are common in the text. If this is a clarification of the "instituting of the social significations," as I think it is, it fails since this passage suggests that the structure concerns the entire Western tradition. If that is the case then the social-historical metaphysic must be what is common to such diverse societies as Greece, Rome and 20th Century America. In effect, we are not dealing with a social limitation on theorizing, at least not in the usual sense of the term. The passage just blithely assumes that problems of the individual, theory and practice and instrumentalism are the same in all times and all places, or all times and all places in the Western tradition, as though that were a qualification.

The only unambiguous assertion in the passage makes the whole argument even weaker. Castoriadis says that the "social imaginary institutes logic and reason itself." The claim is either too dogmatic or self-refuting. It is dogmatic because if it were true it would a priori condemn all attempts at critical thinking, including the "elucidation" Castoriadis offers. But it is also self-refuting since if true it would be not possible to make such an assertion in the first place. I am not arguing that there is in fact some trans-historical rationality at work in our tradition only that Castoriadis has either provided no argument or actually is arguing that a metaphysical concept of rationality *transcends* social structures (recall that he defines educidation as transcending all theoretical activity). One simply can't tell from the passage quoted, or many others which are equally unclear. The best that can be said about these passages is that Castoriadis works himself into verbal dead ends that reveal problems but goes no further in resolving them. "In particular it is impossible to disentangle science, in its different

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epochs, from the magma of imaginary social significations of which it is a part, as it is to simply bury it in the latter. This is strikingly shown by instances of physics and mathematics, both in Greece and in the 17th century (and the same is true in our day), both are heavily dependent on the central imaginary schema of the two social-historical worlds in question or what they institute as real and thinkable — but they cannot be reduced to this" (p. 91).

These qualifications exhibit a typical Castoriadis strategy. The first qualifications, that science cannot be separated from its epoch but not reduced to its historical determinations, cannot help but be correct since it makes no particular assertion. It is virtually an unfalsifiable statement and is a criticism of no one. Even positivists could accept Castoriadis' formulation at that point. But the next sentence makes the stronger assertin that physics and mathematics are "heavily dependent" on imaginary schemas of their respective social-historical worlds. How can we deal with these passages? If the schemas institute what is real and thinkable how can science be in any way independent of these schemas (which are social-historical) and if science is not independent then why is it not reducible to them? If, as I suspect, Castoriadis realized that historicism makes it difficult to account for scientific change, then his qualifications are not attempts at a solution but merely a verbal blessing.

The most frustrating part of such passages is that Castoriadis refuses to discuss examples and authoritatively assures the reader that everyone knows evidence of such historical dtermination for physics and mathematics. Not only is the reader given no demonstration or evidence but Castoriadis seems confidently unaware of the vast research, after Kuhn, that investigates cases of social determination in science. Let me try a very oversimplified example to see if it throws any light on how Castoriadis is using his basic concepts.

How could one go about showing that mathematics or physics is heavily dependent on imaginary significations that are socially produced? It is sometimes noted that Galileo failed to appreciate Kepler's discovery of elliptical orbits for the planets even though he corresponded with Kepler, possessed his books and was always on the lookout for good pro-Copernican arguments. Even more significant, Galileo's own research on Terrestrial motion had shown that a ball fired from a cannon follows the path of a parabola, a fact which when combined with ellipitcal orbits would have revealed a common physics for both terrestrial and heavenly motions. A social argument for Galileo's blindness is that he could not question the ancient doctrine or "image" that orbits must be circular, that cirlces represent perfect motion and that the heavens are the place of endless, eternal motion, therefore of circles. An argument could also connect the "image" of circularity with a socially produced and imposed set of meanings that constrained theorizing. Such a set of meanings would not only be socially produced but imaginary in the sense that they had emotional, archtypical possibly ideological origins. I am guessing that something like this is behind Castoriadis' assertion that science is entwined with instituted social images which function as what Bachelard called 'epistemological obstacles".

But there are serious problems with such an argument. Why was the image of circularity so much weaker for Kepler who, though having no strong emotional attachment to it, did remain committed to the project of finding mathematical harmonies in the heavens? Galileo was much more radical than Kepler in his social, political and religious views. Then why would he rather than Kepler be prisoner of precisely such a socially produced image of circularity? Finally in what sense is the image of circularity of *socially* produced image? If it is rooted socially and historically why was it adopted by

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vastly different societies and why did it change shortly after Kepler without there being a significant change in the social structure? If Castoriadis' only answer to these questions is to repeat his qualification that after all science cannot be reduced to the imaginary significations then we are left with empty assertions. What have we gained by elaborating this terminology of the "magma of socially instituted imaginary significations?"

Let me conclude with another specific example. The preface to this work begins with a perfectly good question: what is theory? However, Castoriadis produces a muddle in giving an answer. He starts off well enough with the further point that theory is an activity and all activities are historical. But again he concludes that somehow it is both conditioned and not conditioned by history. We first are told, "There is theoretical activity, the making/doing of theory, which emerges only at a given historical moment." But that is followed by, "If history and history of thought are truly determined, then there is nothing but a vast tautological system." Yes, that is the problem with views of socially conditioned knowledge. After Castoriadis asserts that Plato and Aristotle are dependent on the Greek polis we find this argument: "History and the history of thought is an ontological creation in the full sense of the term. It is not just production (reproduction of exemplars, of a given eidos) nor is it simply ontological creation, the emergence of another eidos. It is creation of kinds of eidos [sic] themselves, of another dehisence of ground and figure, of another cohesion/solidarity of its component parts" (p. xxv).

It would be a gross understatement to say it is difficult to make anything of this argument. If history of thought is an ontological creation, does Castoriadis mean it is created by us who study it or by those who originally invented theories, or by both? The obscure second sentence refers to what is usually called the paradigmatic view of knowledge. In such a view all theories are subsumed under a wider framework or perspective that establishes the presuppositions of theories, such fundamentals as what it means to know, see or reason. Both Kuhn and Foucault have tried to give historical evidence of such frameworks, however neither believes that therefore the history of thought is an "ontological creation." Foucault, for example, denies that there is a history of ideas and that ideas are not what we should study to understand the evolution of theories, whereas Kuhn argues that paradigms are themselves responsive to non-paradigmatic historical forces.

One interpretation of Castoriadis might be that he is arguing like Collingwood, namely, that the object of the social sciences is distinct from the object of the natural sciences because the former requires human action and intention for it to exict, thus, an "ontological creation." But later on Castoriadis instructs us that, in his view, the objects of quantum physics are also human constructs and thus not unlike the objects of the social sciences. Therefore in what sense is history an ontological creation "in the full sense"? The rest of Castoriadis' claim is even more obscure, though that may be another translation problem. He explains ontological creation by saying he does not mean production or ontological creation of an eidos (does he mean "idea"?). I am at a total loss, then, as to what "ontological creation in the full sense" means.

Crossroads in the Labyrinth is the kind of book where the reader will more easily find a rapid summary of Cantor's theory of sets than a clear discussion of its central thesis, that knowledge is socially conditioned. Castoriadis tosses off in three pages the claim that he has invented a new logic for the social sciences, a set-theoretical logic at that, but cannot seem to get the time to give a clear presentation of his main concept, "the imaginary institution of social significations." Castoriadis is no fool and he is anxious for the reader to appreciate how learned he is. But somewhere along the way, Cas-

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toriadis has forgotten that showing he can write three-page summaries on everything from quantum physics to economics is an accomplishment on the level of writing a dictionary if there is no point, analysis or argument to be made clearer by these summaries. The problem is that Castoriadis does not discuss or make an argument in this collection, he bludgeons, asserts, digresses and philosophizes, in the worst sense of that term. All this bombast makes for a disappointing book, not because the central issues are uninteresting or unimportant, but because the reader is put in the role of an empty-headed undergraduate being bamboozled rather than informed by a professor's arcane expertise and verbal pyrotechnics. Sadly, it's all, as Feyerabend says somewhere, "more clothes from the emperor's bargain basement."

Robert D'Amico

Anson Rabinbach, *The Crisis of Austrian Socialism: From Red Vienna to Civil War, 1927-1934.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983. 296 pp., $22.00 cloth.

An unnerving parallel to the latest crisis of the Left gently ambushes the reader long before the last page of Rabinbach's monograph has been turned. Between 1904 and 1914 a group of sharp, well-read, generously thoughtful University of Vienna men created a form of Marxism "which has perhaps made more original contributions to the history of the doctrine than any other"[1] — an intellectual and political program tensely poised between orthodox revisionism and Bolshevism. Then, over the next 20 years, they resolutely marched into historical oblivion by paying less attention to "petty tactical artifices"[2] than to elegant thought on behalf of their utopia, a *Bildungsgemeinschaft* sans politics. What Lenin did poorly — they laughed at the "thought" within *Materialism and Empirio-Criticism,* as we do today — they did wonderfully; and at what he did better than anyone, winning political battles through polemical nastiness,[3] they were all thumbs. As to that disturbing parallel: it is farfetched to place our hallowed 60's crowd, and its trajectory since around 1970, in the same historical league with the Austro-Marxists, yet the comparison is unavoidable. Even if the analogy is technically weak, the *attitude* of both "groups" is simpatico, and their defeats at the hands of reaction, even if Reagan is no Dollfuss, remind us that the friends of the *Phenomenology*, of "species being," of what Max Adler called "the social a priori,"[4] have lost the political chances of the 20th century, even as libraries swell with their works and those of their

1. Leszek Kolakowski, *Main Currents of Marxism,* trans. P.S. Falla, vol. 2, "The Golden Age" (NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1981, pb ed.), p. 258.

2. Otto Bauer, editorial intro. to the first issue of *Der Kampf* (1907-08), in Tom Bottomore and Patrick Goode, eds. and trans., *Austro-Marxism* (NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1978), p. 54.

3. Kolakowski, *ibid.*, pp. 520-27, "Lenin as a polemicist. Lenin's genius": "The great bulk of Lenin's published work consists of attacks and polemics. The reader is invariably struck by the coarseness and aggressiveness of his style, which are unparalleled in the whole history of socialism . . . Lenin's genius was not that of foresight, but of concentrating at a given moment all the social energies that could be used to seize power, and subordinating all his efforts and those of his party to this one aim. Without Lenin's firmness of purpose, it is unthinkable that the Bolsheviks could have succeeded," pp. 520, 525-26.

4. Max Adler, *Kausalität und Teleologie im Streite um die Wissenschaft* (Vienna: Wiener Volksbuchhandlung Ignaz Brand, 1904).

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admirers.[5] Rabinbach has expertly assembled a document so stunningly dark in its message — all the darker in his refusal to say so himself — that one wishes, on cloudy days, he had left it unwritten. Perhaps the dozen years of the book's making is more a result of this enveloping darkness than more common obstacles to scholarly completions.

Before getting into the historical details of Rabinbach's minatory tale, and because he did not deem it part of his task to render Bauer and his friends in human terms, it may be worthwhile to flesh out this political history with a group portrait that seems to square with everything said about these men in the book, but which Rabinbach could hardly quote himself. The source is widely regarded, far beyond the expected praise of Isaac Deutscher,[6] as a masterpiece of its genre, and the section is question validates this opinion, especially since it corroborates Rabinbach's own conclusions, drawn, in contrast, from a sympathetic point of view. Trotsky is not often heard from in these pages. (Kolakowski sees him as a "*poseur* . . . given to theoretical gestures,"[7] a marginal figure in the history of the left, without lasting importance.) But according to those around *New Left Review* (e.g., Perry Anderson), he is unwisely neglected, and his autobiography is especially esteemed. As objectionable or obsolete as he may be theoretically, he did manage to catch the flavor — if not the substance — of Austro-Marxism in *My Life* several years prior to the collapse of Otto Bauer's movement. Rabinbach does not mention this portrait, but Bottomore does,[8] and even allowing for the provincial's sour grapes Trotsky must have felt for these ultra-sophisticates at the heart of advanced thinking ("Wittgenstein's Vienna"), I find his caricature extremely telling when set beside Rabinbach's dispassionate account. (It does not hurt that "He is, in his generation, the greatest master of Russian prose,"[9] which comes through even in translation.) Had it been written after the February, 1934 debacle, it could be ignored as convenient hindsight, but as it was not, Trotsky manages to breathe life into the theoretical and strategic tragedy Rabinbach recounts, moment by moment. "So we made our home in Vienna. But during all those seven years I watched German life more attentively than I did Austrian, which reminded me too much of a squirrel in a cage . . . Viktor Adler, the recognized leader of the party, I had known since 1902. Now it was time for me to get acquainted with those who were around him, and with his party as a whole. I made the acquaintance of Hilferding in the summer of 1907, in Kautsky's house . . . quite unexpectedly for me, he insisted from the very first that we address each other as "thou." Because of this our outward relations took on the semblance of intimacy. But there was no moral or political basis for it. Hilferding regarded the staid and passive German Social Democracy of that time with great contempt, and contrasted it with the activity of the Austrian party. This criticism, however, retained its fireside character. In practice, Hilferding remained a literary official in the service of the German party — and nothing more . . . We once met Macdonald in one of the Berlin cafès. Eduard Bernstein acted as the interpreter. Hilferding asked the questions, Macdonald answered . . . I

5. This inverse relation between intellectual creativity and political efficacy is thoroughly explained in Russell Jacoby's *Dialectic of Defeat: Contours of Western Marxism* (NY: Cambridge Univ. Press, 1981); see my review, *Telos* No. 52. That political losers live on in the scholarly domain is attested by still another large, expensive anthology of Austro-Marxist writings: Gerald Mozetic, ed., *Austromarxistische Positionen* (Wien: Herman Böhlaus, 1983), 80DM (pb), 520 pp, roughly twice the size of the Bottomore/Goode anthology.

6. *The Prophet Outcast: Trotsky, 1929-1940* (NY: Oxford Univ. Press, 1963), pp. 221-30, 252-53.

7. *Op. Cit.*, p. 524.

8. *Austro-Marxism*, p. 14, n. 42.

9. Deutscher, *ibid.*, p. 252.

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asked myself which of these three men stood farthest from what I had been accustomed to call socialism. And I was at a loss for an answer. It was Hilferding who first introduced me to his friends in Vienna, Otto Bauer, Max Adler, and Karl Renner. They were well educated people whose knowledge of various subjects was superior to mine. I listened with intense and, one might almost say, respectful interest to their conversation in the "Central" cafe. But very soon I grew puzzled. These people were not revolutionaries. Moreover, they represented the type that was farthest from that of the revolutionary. This expressed itself in everything — in their approach to subjects, in their political remarks, and psychological appreciations, in their self-satisfaction — not self-assurance, but self-satisfaction. I even thought I sensed philistinism in the quality of their voices. I was surprised to find that these educated Marxists were absolutely incapable of applying Marx's method as soon as they came to the big problems of politics, especially its revolutionary turns. I first became convinced of this with regard to Renner . . . we spoke of the possible developments in Russia, where the counter-revolution was then firmly in the saddle. Renner discussed these questions with the civility and indifference of an educated foreigner . . . We had no common ground for continuing our conversation. I saw clearly that the man was as far from revolutionary dialectics as the most conservative Egyptian pharoah. My first impressions were only intensified by further observation. These men knew a great deal, and they were capable, within the limits of political routine, of writing good marxist articles. But to me they were strangers. I was more firmly convinced of this, the more extensive my connections became the keener my observations grew. In informal talks among themselves, they revealed, much more frankly than in their articles and speeches, either undisguised chauvinism, or the bragging of a petty proprietor, or holy terror of the police, or vileness toward women. In amazement, I often exclaimed, "What revolutionaries!" I am not referring here to the workers who, of course, also have many philistine traits, though of a naive and simple sort. No, I was meeting the flower of the pre-war Austrain Marxists, members of parliament, writers, and journalists. At those meetings, I learned to understand the extraordinary variety of the elements that can be comprised within the mind of one man, and the great distance which separates the mere passive assimilation of certain parts of a system from its complete psychological re-creation as a whole, from re-educating oneself in the spirit of a system. The psychological type of Marxist can develop only in an epoch of social cataclysms, of a revolutionary break with traditions and habits; whereas an Austrian Marxist too often revealed himself a philistine who had learned certain parts of Marxist theory as one might study law, and had lived on the interest the *Das Kapital* yielded him. In the old imperial, hierarchic, vain and futile Vienna, the academic Marxists would refer to each other with a sort of sensuous delight as "Herr Doktor." Workers often called the academicians, "Genosse Herr Doktor." During all the seven years I lived in Vienna, I never had a heart-to-heart talk with any one of this upper group, although I was a member of the Austrian Social Democracy, attended their meetings, took part in their demonstrations, contributed to their publications, and sometimes made short speeches in German. I felt that the leaders of the Social Democrats were alien, whereas I found, quite easily, a mutual language with the Social Democratic workers at meetings or at May-day demonstrations . . . The Viennese leaders of the Social Democracy used the same formulas that I did. But one had only to turn any of them five degres around on the axes to discover that we gave quite different meanings to the same concepts. Our agreement was a temporary one, superficial and unreal."[10]

10. Leon Trotsky, *My Life* (NY: Pathfinder Press, 1970 [1939]), pp. 205-09.

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Trotsky continues, recalling how these men who "prided themselves on being realists and on being businesslike" opened a bakery in 1907 to benefit their party, against Trotsky's warning that it would fail, not for economic, but for political reasons. Twenty years later, when it did, Otto Bauer publicly recalled Trotsky's advice. More in keeping with Rabinbach's account is Trotsky's observation on Viktor Adler, the movement's founder: he "was in all respects far above the rest of his colleagues. But he had long been a skeptic. In the Austrian scramble, his fighting temper was wasted on little things" (p. 211). Just this flailing in the multi-national cauldron of Austrian politics is what defeated not only the elder Adler, but his entire lifework via his colleagues. Trotsky makes an instructive comparison: "In Berlin, the atmosphere was different — though essentially perhaps not much better, still, different. The ridiculous Mandarin attitude of the Viennese academists scarcely existed there. Relations were simpler. There was less nationalism, or at least it had not the incentive to reveal itself as often or as vociferously as it had in many-nationed Austria." (p. 212) Even though the *Nationalitätenfuage* occasioned some brilliant writing among the Austro-Marxists (especially the young Bauer), in the end failure to transcend ethnocentrisms, the pre-political polarities in Austrian culture — to arrange a situation where, as in Germany "nationalist sentiment seemed to have dissolved in the pride of the part" (*ibid.*) — blocked the movement's success.

Trotsky arrived in Vienna at 28. The men he lampooned were of his generation: Bauer, 26; Max Adler, 34; Hilferding, 30; and Renner, 37. Viktor Adler (no relation to Max) was 55 and a respected man, the only one Trotsky admired. One could dismiss Trotsky's opinion of this talented leftist Vienna circle as simple jealousy of one revolutionary for his counterparts in a foreign country. Yet Rabinbach's meticulous chronology of the left's decomposition in Austria gives more than a little credence to Trotsky's unflattering set piece.

But what forces one to accept more or less at face value Trotsky's appraisal of these "revolutionary" Marxists is not just the verdict of history, but the philosophical roots of the school. Trotsky gives no evidence that he studied Max Adler's work, but it seems hardly surprising now that his thought, as the foundation upon which his colleagues constructed their more pragmatic writings, built in the very sorts of antinomies Kant had forsworn. Adler, like many at the time, was mightily impressed with neo-Kantianism, but as a Marxist, he needed to have it both ways, somehow to integrate Kant's critique of consciousness with Marx's analogous dismantling of commodity fetishism and reified existence. This, of course, is the supremely bourgeois a priori, on a conceptual level, that Trotsky found repulsive when played out in personal and political terms. What it meant doctrinally was the apotheosis of the individual's self-realization, even if within a collective environment, and, perhaps more ruinous politically, a belief that *Bildung* for the workers, offered through a reformed state apparatus, would naturally lead to socialism. The denizens of the Central Café were interested neither in the lunch-bucket politics of the German Social Democrats, nor the incendiary actions of Lenin and the Bolsheviks, the former because it was too pedestrian, the latter because it made life too risky for everyone, particularly intellectuals. These were gentle-men, vastly learned, aesthetically sensitive — Simmels on the left, perhaps. What is most amazing, though, is not what they believed — e.g., Max Adler's insistence that ideology was as "real" as substructure, that Kant's ideas merged naturally with Marx's[11] — but that they were able to presevere in the Austrian pandemonium as long

11. Max Adler, "Ideology as Appearance," from *Lehrbuch der materialistischen Geschichtsauffassung*, 2 vols. (Berlin: E. Laub'sche Verlagsbuchandlung, 1930, 1932), trans. in Bottomore and

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as they did. But they had a definite view of their destiny, and they stuck to it, no matter what the cost: "Every proletariat develops its own particular virtues as a result of the nature of its tasks. If the Germans, as the children of a nation of poets and thinkers, became masters of theory, the English pioneers of trade union organization, the Belgians outstanding in the co-operative movement, the French path-finders of revolutionary and parliamentary tactics, and the Russians wonderful exemplars of a spirit of sacrifice and struggle (although the tendency of capitalism to produce more homogeneous conditions has brought about, in recent years, an exchange, generalization, and supplementation of these merits) so one particular role was reserved for the Austrians. Above all we had, and have, the difficult task of translating the idea of internationalism into living reality . . . There is also a second task. Every other proletariat — even the Russian — confronted a well-defined typical form of the state. But in Austria we have to deal with a chaotic state, with state laws which do not die and state institutions that cannot live . . . A community of states, the state, feudal domains, nations — not one of them is fully born or finally dead. They are all mixed creations of birth and death . . . This quandary obliges us to enter into rather tedious constitutional and administrative questions . . . It makes us, against our will and inclination perhaps, the constitutional experts of the International."[12]

These men were intellectually excited and excitable, so it is essential to take seriously their ideological upbringing and allegiances prior to their praxis, which came much later. As Trotsky observed after spending an evening in 1907 talking with Renner, "At that time, it never entered the head of this educated and talented Habsburg official that the unhappy destiny of Austria-Hungary, whose historical advocate he then was, would make him, ten years later, the chancellor of the Austrian republic" (*My Life*, p. 207). None of these *Denkers* could have foreseen their adulthood spent in constant political exertion, after the leisurely, safe, productive cafè period. Remember that already by 1910 Bauer had written a masterpiece on the national question and imperialism, Adler had begun his Kantianization of Marx, Hilferding had written *Finanzcapital*, and Renner had published his major work on law; these were seasoned, first-class intellectuals. However, what Bauer said in 1907 when introducing their journal was only too true later on, that Austrian political life turned on every possible contradiction: city versus country (actually Vienna versus everybody); cosmopolitan internationalism versus petty provincialism; rabid Bolshevism versus salon reformism; dedicated communists versus dedicated fascists; factory proletarians versus manorial serfs, and so on. It seems probable that Adler's strained amalgam of idealism and

Goode, *op. cit.*, pp. 253-61; Adler's "The Relation of Marxism to Classical German Philosophy," from *Kant und der Marxismus* (Berlin: Laub'sche, 1925), *ibid.*, pp. 62-68; and Kolakowski, *op. cit.*, pp. 258-73 on Adler's theory of transcendental consciousness. Kolakowski summarizes the cardinal imperative of Austro-Marxism within a philosophical context: "To the Austrians universality was a major principle and not a mere piece of rhetoric. Consequently, when they wrote about the society of the future they had less to say about authority and institutional changes than about the free self-government of workers. They regarded the collectivization of property as an instrument of socialist change but not as the whole of socialism, which also involved socialization of the productive process itself and thus the control of all economic life by the society of producers. They believed that the Kantian rule of treating the individual always as an end and not a means was fully in accord with the principles of socialism, and that socialism would be a parody of itself if it did not have as its sole aim the free development of human persons in association" (pp. 242-43). The yawning chasm between this position and that of the Bolsheviks, or, more tragically, of the National Socialists — the relative valuing of the individual amidst social change — is what makes the Austro-Marxists heroes of the library and goats in the history books.

12. Otto Bauer, "Editorial intro. to the first issue of *Der Kampf*, 1907/08," trans. in Bottomore and Goode, *op. cit.*, pp. 53-54.

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materialism had no more to do with post-war Austro-Marxism than the pragmatic dictates of daily political warfare. Perhaps Bauer foresaw what in fact became necessity for his party, to weld together a coalition of refractory groups and their elites in the only bloodless way he could imagine, by extending the *Bildungsvereine* of the 1860s into an encompassing *Bildungsgemeinschaft*, even socialist state. What all this amounts to is rather simple, I think. Lenin's approach to heterogeneity was to *make* homogeneity happen, whatever the toll philosophically or in human terms. The Viennese intellectuals could no more exterminate the opposition than burn their libraries for fun. In Elias Canetti's terms (*Auto-da-Fé*), they all suffered from Professor Kien's paralyzing affection for ideas and learning, and his final conflagration matched theirs. When their opponents fully understood what Bauer meant by "slow revolution," his willingness to build socialism through cultural and educational institutions over generations,[13] they recognized they had little physically to fear from Austro-Marxism. This sets the stage for the events between 1927 and 1934, which unfold as ineluctably as any reputable tragedy.

Rabinbach's book does not offer a theoretical commentary or critique of Austrian social democracy.[14] Instead he has done history, old-style; he's told what happened to the best of anyone's recollecting. The outline of events is simple enough, and usually merits a footnote, in Borkenau's *World Communism* or similar treatments.[15] Jacoby's *Dialectic of Defeat* and Piccone's *Italian Marxism*, also carefully constructed products of matured leftists, educated with New Left hopes, have accustomed us to the dismal reord of dreams crushed under fascist boots. Summary statements of the similar events Rabinbach has plotted in full are readily available: "Until 1934, when the counter-revolution took place in Austria, Bauer continues to be a popular and respected party leader and theorist. He believed that the socialists could in time achieve power without violence or civil war, and he tried to win over the peasants to socialism . . . He had no wish . . . to share power with the Christian Social Party, nor did the latter evince any desire for collaboration; when Bauer proposed to Dollfuss (Chancellor from 1932) a coalition against the Fascist threat, he met with refusal. In 1933 the Austrian parliament was dissolved and the government's provocative actions drove the workers into a general strike: the short civil war which followed ended in the triumph of reaction and the suppression of the socialist party. Bauer fled to Czechoslovakia and, with a group of emigrès, endeavoured to save what was left of Austrian socialism by founding a new party. In May 1938 he moved to Paris, where he died soon after."[16] This is the conventional view of events, and though inaccurate on specifics, is more or less true. Another general account takes a different angle: "In the end a civil war was forced upon the Austrian working class in February 1934 by the actions of Dollfuss . . . and yielding finally to continued pressure from Mussolini undertook to suppress the whole Social Democratic movement. It was a civil war fought in the most unfavourable conditions. The general strike which was to inaugurate the armed resis-

13. Bauer, *Der Weg zum Sozialismus* (Vienna: Wiener Volksbuchhandlung, 1919); see Bottomore's comments in *Austro-Marxism*, pp. 26, 39, 288.

14. A pitiless but still useful short treatment is Melvin Croan's "Prospects for the Soviet Dictatorship: Otto Bauer," in Leopold Labedz, ed., *Revisionism: Essays on the History of Marxist Ideas* (NY: Praeger, 1962), pp. 281-96.

15. Franz Borkenau, *World Communism* (Ann Arbor: Univ. of Michigan Press, 1962 [1939]), p. 380: "Fighting went on for four days . . . it was not a big affair . . ." George Lichtheim (inspired by Borkenau; p. viii) gave it the same treatment in *Marxism: An Historical and Critical Study* (NY: Praeger, 1965), p. 310, n. 1. Also Jacoby, *Dialectic of Defeat,* p. 141, n. 1.

16. Rolakowski, *op. cit.,* p. 257.

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tance was a failure, largely as a consequence of prolonged high unemployment and the reduced militancy of workers; the *Schutzbund* was disorganized, and many of the Socialist leaders had already been arrested; a considerable number of party members and leaders had hoped until the last moment to avoid an armed struggle and entered upon it, if at all, with the greatest reluctance. In Julius Deutsch's words, the Austrian workers 'had been forced to wage a revolutionary battle in a non-revolutionaly situation.' "[17] This does not square very well with a detailed treatment, but again, the outcome is justly dark. Yet there are indeed lessons to be learned from the Austrians' sorry experience.

Had Rabinbach not been working so long on the book, one might imagine that he took his cue from Bottomore: "Austro-Marxism, therefore can be said to have embodied, during three turbulent decades in European history, that unity of theory and practice which is often proclaimed but rarely attained; and its development provides the material for an *exceptionally interesting case study* of the relations and reciprocal influence between theoretical conceptions and practical policies." (*Austro-Marxism*, p. 37, emphases added.) In a footnote Bottomore then names the standard memoirs and studies up to 1978, including those of Renner, Hannak, Braunthal, Gulick, Leser, and Wandruszka. But all of these are eclipsed by Rabinbach's.

Aside from exhausting a couple hundred items of secondary literature, nearly all of it in German, Rabinbach has done two other things which make the book unique and invaluable to students of the movement. In 1971 and 1972, as part of his dissertation research — "Ernst Fischer and the Left Opposition in Austrian Social Democracy" (1973) — he managed to interview Ilona Duczynska (Polanyi), Ernst Fischer (5 times), Otto Fischer, Walter Fischer, Ilse Kulscar, Trude Kurz, and Karl Mark, all of whom played roles in the fate of the party. He also corresponded with other principles. Secondly, he has apparently ransacked all the available archives (also in Vienna), including 24 sets of unpublished material, plus 22 volumes of published documents. He also used 32 newspapers and periodicals of the period. This kind of zeal has come to be known as "*Telos*-style scholarship," and its fruits, like its inspiration, are mixed. On one hand we are offered the complete story in exhaustive detail, and on the other, find ourselves exhausted by same. It is like reading either a one-volume history of WW II, or the standard version in 55 volumes. The first is breezy and perpetrates the illusion of certainty, while the second insists upon certainty and struggles toward facsimile breeziness. Put another way, Rabinbach has researched himself onto a pinnacle which no-one else can ascend; he knows more about what went on than even Ernst Fischer, a major player. He tactfully corrects all kinds of mistakes, of fact and interpretation, that participants have entered into the record through memoirs and other statements. He can tell you who came to a crucial meeting of the party executive in "the apartment of Julius Deutsch's sister Frau Helene Popper in the Gumpendorferstrasse in the sixth district on the morning of February 12," who said what, who left early, and who exclaimed, in anger and disgust, "how could the railway workers leave the whole movement *in der Scheissgass'n* (up shit street)?" (p. 204). We don't really find out how or why they left the movement up there without a paddle, but that's because Rabinbach chose to write a court history of the left. He does not speculate on the mood or condition or the railway workers, because he doesn't have the data for that. Instead, he only states what he can back up with documentation (which accounts for over 1,000 endnotes, most of which identify a source, not adding substantively to the book). Naturally, this places party leaders and other functionaries outside the party in cen-

17. Bottomore, intro. to *op. cit.*, p. 41.

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terstage, since their remarks and writings tend to be the best preserved and the most extensive. It becomes history from the top down, even if the top is a bunch of leftists.

I admire Rabinbach's achievement, but it does have limitations which are peculiar to the genre, the fact-filled documentary monograph which avoids speculative flights like Bauer avoided bloodshed. Take, for instance, Bottomore's assertion (quoted above) that the "general strike . . . was a failure, largely as a consequence of prolonged high unemployment and the reduced militancy of workers . . . " This is not the feeling you get from Rabinbach's study. First, it is hard to measure "reduced militancy" except post facto, and even then it may be tautological. But more importantly, Rabinbach attributes overwhelming import, it seems to me, to weak leadership. Throughout the book Bauer's "pessimism" blocks successful strategic moves each time a chance represented itself, especially beginning on July 15, 1927, when 85 workers were killed by the sabers and bullets of police outside the Justizpalast in Vienna. This unanswered attack on the Social Democrats was interpreted as the fruit of Bauer and Renner's notion of "unity within multiplicity," and of the former's "third way" between reformism and revolution (pp. 32-40). Bauer, in fact, was following G. D. H. Cole, the ideas of British guild socialism, somehow underestimating the viciousness of Austrian reaction compared with the English (p. 39). And even after his party's utter destruction, he stuck with moderate ideas — in 1936 no less! — of "integral socialism," vainly trying to link social democratic premises ("the irreplaceable cultural value of democracy, of individual rights, spiritual freedom, and collective self-determinatin") with communist praxis ("proletarian revolutions").[18] Oddly enough, in a book choking with facts — names, dates, statistics, places — it is hard to evaluate major questions regarding Bauer's leadership because certain necessary data are not presented, or appear at the very end.

Let's go back several years in the history of the republic. Amato's discussion of Bauer's public rehabilitation, after 30 years of silence, is salient: "The renewed interest in Austromarxism focuses on the reconstruction of these practical achievements which most fully explicate Austrian social-democracy's cultural dimension between the two world wars: from the social legislation — primarily in city planning and industrial relations . . . to the important (and previously overlooked) reform of the elementary educational system . . .; from the network of more than 1500 consumer cooperatives, youth, cultural and sports associations, to the perhaps unique experiences of feminist social-democratic organizations whose journals, *Die Frau* (monthly) and *Die Unzufriedene* (weekly) boasted an average distribution of 160,000 and 120,000 copies . . . and the *Republikanischer Schutzbund*." (Amato, *op. cit.*, p. 147)Rabinbach mentions neither of these feminist periodicals, nor gives a very deft picture of the party's achievements through its "*Bildungs*-commissions" prior to the decline after 1927. He is completely justified in skimming over this since others have already covered the period, and his interest is a political history of the collapse. Yet this creates the feeling one might have of Johnson's "Great Society" if one read only about the Carter administration's failures in Democratic leadership. The fact is that until the late 20s, Bauer's bloodless path, his confidence in the "significant role of human 'subjectivity' and intentionality in the historical process" and belief that the modern state could be tamed and made to serve proletarian interests (p. 38), had brought about momentous

18. "*Zwischen Zwei Weltkriegen*," written two years before his death while in exile; *Werkausqabe*, vol. iv (Wien, 1975-78), p. 307. Quoted in Sergio Amato, "Otto Bauer and Austro-Marxism: A Conference Report," *Telos* No. 40 (Summer 1979), p. 148.

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changes, especially in Vienna. He obviously felt justified, and was able to convince others of his feeling, that revolution would do more harm than good, particularly with vociferous fascists to Austria's north and south.

Though Rabinbach does not do much with logistical data, he finally gets around to the "objective"facts of the matter — data which Bauer probably had and which must have conditioned his "pessimistic" hesitancy to fight — regarding military strength of the contending forces. His troops, the *Schutzbündler*, using antique rifles, no cannons or tanks, and with uneven leadership and enthusiasm, numbered around 40,000, with 17,500 in Vienna. The *Schutzbund* had managed to lose, mostly to police confiscations, "685 machine guns, 38,370 repeating rifles, and 535,000 cartridges before February 1933, and 25 machine guns, 1,210 repeating rifles, and 57,000 cartridges in the year before the revolt" (p. 202). Perhaps Bauer was preparing a new tract: *How Not to Fight Urban Warfare*. Two days before the civil war, so-called, the police turned up another 12 machine guns, 200 rifles, and 20,000 bullets. One wonders, how do you go about losing 40,000 rifles? In any case, Bauer had reason to worry. Not only was he unarmed, but against his troops were the rightist paramilitary *Heimwahr* (23,250), the Austrian Nazis, illegal, but happy to be there (26,450) — though they didn't enter the fray on Feb. 12 — smaller rightist organizations (21,000), plus 6,000 of Dollfuss' SWAT men, 25,000 army troops, federal police with 8,000 men, and 4,000 Vienna cops. This have the forces of reaction and repression — with modern arms and artillery — better than a two to one advantage over Bauer's nervous might.

If all this was not enough to seal the socialists' fate, still other factors worked against them. Their insurgency scheme was concocted in October, 1931, the "Eifler Plan." Not only was it militarily clumsy, but the police had a copy long before the insurrection. Also, "The success of the plan was largely dependent upon the simultaneous general strike . . . " (p. 197), which did not happen. The only sophisticated strategist on the left, Theodor Körner, viewed the Plan as "absurd and a crime against the working class" (p. 198), but for irrational reasons (mostly party in-fighting) the military "monstrosities" he predicted indeed came to pass. One could go on. In the end — despite the heroics of the Floridsdorf Schutzbund, who enjoyed fine leadership, and held out for a week — the whole thing was over in less than two days, Bauer & Co., had split to Czechoslovakia, and the dead included 120 leftists, 120 government men, and 200 civilians. So much for 30 years of premier theorizing.

In many ways their end is the least significant feature of the Austro-Marxists' existence, at least when viewed from our perspective. For them it meant the end of a life-world, of course. But their defeat, just as their eminently successful theorizing and political-cultural experimenting in the 20s, illustrates certain features of the leftist "style" in Europe which Rabinbach, among many, believes are worth pondering — hence the exhausting labor of writing his book. He explains: "This book argues that Otto Bauer's commitment to a constitutional and democratic republicanism grew increasingly unrealistic as the antirepublican and authoritarian forces in Austria gained in strength, while his focus on the electoral and municipal successes of the party in Vienna revealed the stark disparity between the power of the party in the capitol and its inability to influence the course of the Republic as a whole. In the end, the economic depression and the growth of fascism in Italy, the authoritarian regime in Hungary, and the triumph of National Socialism in Germany made even more apparent the weakness of a Socialist strategy oriented towards the gradual growth and emergence of new institutions within an essentially anti-Socialist environment. Bauer's policies created a "fortress mentality" which provided the illusion of strength while rendering

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the party passive and defensive . . . Perhaps under different circumstances the gradual accumulation of power through urban reform, the growth of cultural hegemony, and successful parliamentary politics might have resulted in a measure of lasting success. But by 1933 even Bauer himself conceded that the optimism and self-confidence which characterized his belief in the possibilities of municipal socialism in Vienna were no longer warranted, and his commitment to democracy was no longer plausible" (p. 40). So far it seems the left's problems were more or less the result of bad political maneuvering and timing. But this is not the impression the book conveys overall, and Rabinbach is somewhat aware of it: ". . . At a deeper level, then, this book is a study of the relationship between the political strategy of a major European Socialist party and the political and cultural context in which it evolved. Rather than separate the party's successes from its failures, I have tried to show how the two were intimately related: first, in the creation of Red Vienna out of the limits imposed by the revolution of 1918-19; and second, in the emergence, from the institutions created by the Socialists in the first decades of the Republic, of the sources of resistance to both the party leadership and the Austrian right in the early 1930s" (p. 5). Rabinbach knows leagues more about all of this than I, or probably anyone, but it seems to me that inside his assemblage of documents and analysis, "at a deeper level," there is still another message that comes through which is less easily expressed from within the frame of leftist historiography, with the analytic weight it give "objective" social forces and relations. North of Austria, it was well-known — and maliciously used by the Nazis — that throughout the Weimar period, provincial Germans, that is, many living outside Berlin, felt the same disgust, attraction, astonishment, and shock at "Weimar Culture" that Orange County Republicans felt for Haight-Ashbury in the mid-60s, but moreso, because Berlin was an official repository of historical dignity gone "creative." The Central Cafè-ists never concealed their pride in Vienna, the show-place of socialism with a human face in Europe, and when rightists of all stripes began to work up support in the provinces, party leaders in the capital did not do enough to lessen their appeal. And since Rabinbach repeatedly refers, as I mentioned earlier, to Bauer's "pessimism" and hesitancy to act, the Austrian drama takes on less the look of large-scale historical forces thundering into one another than a classical play of political wills concentrated in a few sets of contending leaders.

I realize this sort of explanation tends toward Caesar's report on the Gallic campaigns, or Tuchman's story of August, 1914, in which Famous People did things. Another leftist who mixes the two, but less hesitantly than Rabinbach, is Amato. He proposes a convergence of Bauer and Gramsci (cf. Rabinbach, p. 120) "in the primary role they both ascribe to the socialization of politics [what Rabinbach calls "the politics of pedagogy," p. 7] in the transition period." His post-mortem on the movement, though, is different: "In light of such considerations, the causes for the final defeat have to be located not so much in 'reformism' or in the 'wait and see policy,' but in the separation of the political and social moments and in the powerless fluctuation between parliamentary tactics and social radicalism resulting from Bauer's misguided attempt to defend democracy from the trench of a communitarian alternative workers' society."[19] What Amato sees as a "separation" of politics and social life at large, Rabinbach understands as Bauer's unflagging struggle to join both through his "balance of classes" idea, worked out nicely in Red Vienna ("a compromise with history," p. 123), but left to flounder about in the hinterlands, that "chaotic state" Bauer had written of so perceptively in 1907 (pp. 120ff).

19. Amato, *op. cit.*, p. 149.

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In one of the rare primarily theoretical sections of his book, Rabinbach calls on Lukács' phenomenal insight, already voiced in 1921, into Bauer's dilemma, to explain at perhaps the "deepest" level why Austro-Marxism had to fail: "[In Austro-Marxism] economic fatalism and the reformation of socialism are intimately connected . . . Such a theory endows the world with a rationality alien to man, and human action can neither penetrate nor influence the world if man takes up a purely contemplative and fatalistic stance . . . This is the attempt to change the world at its only remaining free point, namely man himself (ethics)."[20] Rabinbach calls Lukáks "unfair" in a certain way, but "he is extremely perceptive about ["Bauer's notion of ethical socialism"], its intrinsic dualism and its inherent weakness" (p. 124). Once again, the antique tragi-comic scenario: if you ask professors to improve the social world, they will hand out reading lists, then wait around hoping.

I do not mean to make light of these committed lives, undone by political machinations the ruthlessness of which simply overwhelmed all opponents. The story is full of pathos — Bauer's death in exile, Hilferding's murder by the Gestapo, the rout of the entire left. But it is also infused with infuriating child-like optimism, even naiveté before imminent danger. Toward the very end, a scene is described by Rabinbach: "On the eighth and ninth [Feb., 1934], in the face of these obvious, foreboding signs, Socialist party leaders continued to waver between a fatalistics conviction that the end was near and vain hopes for a last-minute reconciliation with Dollfuss' (p. 188). They then spent valuable hours debating the true meaning of Dollfuss' behavior toward Mayor Seitz, a purely academic (sic) exercise, since "the mayor had virtually no say" anyhow. And just prior to this sad episode of nervous-nellying, things were no better, ". . . the Socialists could still, even when they knew that an armed confrontation was hardly avoidable, underestimate the decisiveness of their opponents" (p. 186). You have to wonder if intellectuals, after reading and writing for enough years about humanitarian causes and impulses, somehow so disturb their faculties that they can no longer see what everyone else can see and feel what is normally felt; they cauterize their emotional sensors with the heat of their ideas — or vice-versa. The phrases defining the results, though, are always the same: "vain hopes," "fatalistic convictions," "wavering," "conciliatory" — in short, pleading for permission to carry on their good works.

In Austria this supplicating posture had been part of the left's self-image for some time. On May 26, 1933, in closing a key speech before his colleagues, Bauer quoted Viktor Adler, the voice of the 19th century: "Being a revolutionary does not mean wanting what one cannot have, but doing all that one can" (p. 99). The Brünn Program offered by the Socialists at a congress in 1899 to solidify a fragmented Austria, unanimously accepted by the delegates, was full of "primitive idealism" and the "Rousseauistic cult of reason," according to dissenting minorities upon whom it was to be perpetrated (p. 15). Early on, then, Austro-Marxism was having trouble "reconciling its optimistic view of history as the rational development of humanity with the problem of ethnic particularism" (*ibid.*), and the enigma of irrationality in general. This carried over naturally enough into the next century. The leadership of the party expressed "helplessness and confusion, a fear and astonishment . . . in the face of the primitive outburst of nationalist and patriotic war enthusiasm" (p. 17). George Haupt (one of Rabinbach's mentors) saw this as reflecting a "mentality of the Socialist leaders, whose rationality and optimism would not allow that such a war [WW I] was truly possible"

20. György Lukács, *History and Class Consciousness,* trans. R. Livingstone (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1971), p. 38. Quoted in Rabinbach, p. 124.

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(*ibid.*). Later on a party leader, Robert Dannesburg, chided the left opposition within the party, by simpering ". . . it is no shame to hesitate and reflect" (p. 98). "For how long?" one might ask.

When vocies within the party were raised during the 20s in perfectly rational objection to this ostrich-behavior — most notably Ilona Duczynska and Wilhelm Reich — they were perfunctorily drummed out, even though they enjoyed loud support among workers and youth (pp. 50-58; 66-70). (Reich engaged in irrepressible praxis by setting up sexual guidance clinics for workers, many of whom were politically liberated but know nothing about disease, contraception, or sexualizing under conditions other than fully clothed, in darkness. At his first rally, 1500 people broke down the doors; this was too unseemly for the party elders.) Ernst Fischer and the youth groups who sympathized with him could make no dent in the leadership's myopic approach to politics, which helps explain why the party lost thousands of members each month toward the end.

Doffuss, like Mussolini and Hitler in their own ways, must have thoroughly enjoyed toying with each "Genosse Herr Doktor" of the party whom he encountered. In March, 1933, he met with Renner, and the latter reported to Bauer that "He appeared very pleased and assured me with a frank wink of the eyes and a handshake that we would soon find a solution" (p. 98). Did he ever! Bauer himself, in exile and powerless, confessed, "We shrank back, dismayed, from the battle . . ." (p. 91).

But to certain people, watching from a relatively safe distance, the auto-destruction of Austro-Marxism came as no surprise at all. In 1914 Bauer (whose sister is known to psychoanalysis as "Dora") visited Freud for some advice. This is what he heard: "Keep your hands off politics. Become a teacher or a professor" (p. 199).

Alan Sica

Cornel West, *Prophesy Deliverance! An Afro-American Revolutionary Christianity.* Philadelphia: Westminster, 1982. 186 pages.

Afro-American social thought lost its critical thrust in the 1970s, when the American state incorporated the organizing principles of civil rights/black power politics. Since that time the protest activism grounding black social thought has floundered in a contradiction. On the one hand, protest requires an alienated outsider evoking the specter of disruptive mobilization. On the other hand, racial politics has assumed the character of negotiated agreements among elites whose legitimacy derives from official positions within the corporate-state nexus, but neither what is negotiated nor the negotiators themselves are amenable to mass mobilization. The former generally are not mass issues (e.g., magnitude of minority set-asides in contract letting), and the latter, structured in the environment of officialdom and rational administration, shrink from popular participation. In this context, the critical dimension of black social thought evaporates, and with its disappearance social thought recedes even further from theoretical aspiration and slouches toward purely instrumental rhetoric.

To be sure, the limitations of the racial protest were perceived by some black activist intellectuals as early as the passage of the 1964 and 1965 civil and voting rights acts, which were inadequate to meet so many of the pressing needs of most of the Afro-

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American population.[1] Devoid of any alternative discourse apparent within the black intellectual community, radicals sought to revitalize or to redefine the racial protest framework by drawing theoretical infusions from other discourses and movements, or by promulgating specially concocted, idiosyncratic perspectives as the "really" black critical outlook. As social movement metamorphosed to social administration, the radicals were left on the cocoon's periphery where their political marginality and intellectual naiveté was exposed and fed the processes of decomposition.

By the late 1970s a slender cohort of leftist black academics, as distinct from their activist predecessors, was making what appeared to be new attempts to provide critical grounding for Afro-American social theory in the post-Civil Rights era.[2] The work of this cohort has promised greater theoretical sophistication and intellectual integrity than that of the earlier, activist radicals. Cornel West's volume is interesting in part because it joins the dialogue of these recent responses to the disjunction of Afro-American social thought from its contingent teleological base.

Prophesy Deliverance! at its best is an attempt at theoretical revitalization through an ambitious and imaginative blending of the critical project of Western philosophy since the Enlightenment with a purportedly endemic black intellectual tradition of "evangelical and pietistic Christianity." The effort, however, fails — in part because its own ambition drives it to soar so far above the sediment of history that it severs terrestrial moorings. In this regard, the book fails to demonstrate either the authenticity or the meaningfulness of the tradition of emancipatory theory that it posits. Moreover, West fails to establish a plausible connection between the rather skimpy philosophical and historical discussions in his argument.

But the volume's failure derives also from certain precarious sociological characteristics of Afro-American intellectuals. A justified fear that the black experience is not taken seriously in intellectual circles frequently leads black writers to make inflated claims concerning the rigor and philosophical integrity of black thought. Since DuBois at least, black intellectuals too often have felt constrained to demonstrate their breadth of knowledge and sagacity, at the expense of more humble tasks. The specific failings of West's volume can be illuminated by comparisons with the work's incommensurate strengths.

West's volume first of all attempts a good deal, more than can be accomplished in less than 150 pages of text. Structurally, the argument consists of two distinct discussions: (1) a rendition of the trajectory of Western philosophy since the Renaissance and (2) a reconstruction of the Afro-American experience. These two discussions are

1. See, for example, Clayborne Carson's discussion of the ongoing debate within SNCC in *In Struggle: SNCC and the Black Awakening of the 1960s* (Cambridge, 1981). Also, Julius Lester's essays in *Revolutionary Notes* (New York, 1969); H. Rap Brown, *Die, Nigger, Die!* (New York, 1969); Robert L. Allen, *Black Awakening in Capitalist America* (Garden City, N.Y., 1969), and Floyd Barbour's anthology, *The Black Power Revolt* (Boston, 1968).

2. Representative of this small current are: William Darity, Jr., "The Theory of Racial Discrimination Revisited: Beyond the Ideology of Equality," *Adherent* 7 (1980); Alex Willingham, "Ideology and Politics: Their Status in Afro-American Social Theory," *Endarch* 1 (1975); Lucius Outlaw, "Language and Consciousness: Toward a Hermeneutic of Black Culture," *Cultural Hermeneutics* 1 (1974); Donald Harris, "The Black Ghetto as 'Internal Colony': A Theoretical Critique and Alternative Formulation," *The Review of Black Political Economy* 2 (1972); Harold Barnette, "Criteria for Cultural Criticism," *Endarch* 1 (1975); Robert Smith, "Black Power and the Transformation from Protest to Politics," *Political Science Quarterly* 96 (Fall 1981); Cornel West, "Philosophy and the Afro-American Experience," *Philosophical Forum* 9 (1979), Jerry G. Watts, "The Case of the Black Conservative," *Dissent* (Summer 1982), and Earl Picard, "The New Black Economic Development Strategy," in this issue of *Telos*.

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intended to converge in a response to what West sees as the "inescapable problematic of inquiry [about the African-American experience]: What is the relationship between the African, American and European elements in this experience" (22). His fundamental claim is that blacks in the United States, in a collective quest for self-identity, have labored under a "triple crisis of recognition." This is connected with a racial experience that is the outcome of a "process of cultural syncretism which combined indigenous African practices and provincial American culture [that] generated a unique variant of American life, one far removed from, yet still tied to, European modernity" (31). The task of reconstruction, therefore, entails explication of the tracings of those African practices, description of the characteristics of provincial American culture, elucidation of the substance of European modernity and a hermeneutic of the confluent relations of the three streams in constituting Afro-American identity.

This project, however, suffers from two problems, one that is endemic to any such project and one specific to West's exposition. Regarding the first, cultural history must differentiate between the discourse of intellectuals and the anonymously held norms, beliefs, and self-understandings that constitute a culture. The latter is an everyday phenomenon, a set of pragmatically held beliefs and practices that structure the consciousness of participants. The former clearly has some dialectical relation to culture as a life-world — crystallizing certain of its elements, indicating logical and historical tendencies within it — but the two operate on different levels. Failure to separate them analytically can lead to a theoretical muddle in which interpretation takes on the character of a mixed metaphor.

Unfortunately, *Prophesy Deliverance!* does not maintain the distinction. West never plausibly connects the streams purported to have come together in black American identity because his interpretation leaps over a critical mediation, the crucible within which Afro-Americanization took shape, i.e., the interaction among blacks and whites in the life-world of developing American institutions. The rarefied air of the predicament of intellectual culture is apparently more attractive to him.

This approach has two fatal consequences. It produces a string of reifications, and it generates tortured attempts to frame mundane black behavior in an inappropriate philosophical context. The first sinks toward banality, as in the assertion that America in the republican era was an "alienated, intensely self-conscious, and deeply anxiety-ridden society" (29), but in the post-modern period "has steadily gained cultural self-confidence" (43). The second ranges toward absurdity, as in the claim that black Americans become Baptists and Methodists because of "intellectual, existential and political" attractions to such characteristics as "individual experience, equality before God and institutional autonomy," not simply because it was mainly Baptists and Methodists who were permitted onto the plantations with Bibles (35f). (Presumably, blacks in Louisiana, Haiti and Brazil became Catholics because they were attracted to collective experience, priestly interposition and institutional hierarchy!)

This problem of confounding the discourse of texts and the substance of culture is not unique to West. It is an idealist reef that commonly scuttles intellectual historians. However, West's volume exhibits another more idiosyncratic conceptual limitation. His reconstruction of the genesis of modern philosophy is pitched in the interstice between two levels of analytic abstraction and consequently does not fulfill the expectations appropriate to either. He discusses the philosophical underpinnings of the dialectic of "European modernity" at a general level of an undergraduate survey course. ("With Napoleon, the Romantic dream of transforming the social order mellowed to temperate efforts at self-realization" [33].) Yet, the puffed-up tone of this discussion

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— with abundant inside references to arguments and literature mentioned but scarcely explicated — suggests that West assumes an audience much more familiar with the texts and tendencies he catalogues. ("Jonathan Edwards . . . constructed his defense of Calvinism from a sophisticated blend of the empiricism of Locke, the determinism of Newton, and the idealism of Plato" [29]!) If the reader is a novice, the tone of erudite summary obfuscates; if not, the superficial rehearsal of a familiar line of interpretation is simply boring. Ultimately, the shallowness of the exposition undermines whatever purpose there might be in undertaking this rendition in the first place — even if we make the highly questionable assumption that there is an immediate connection between the history of philosophy and the history of culture.

The superficiality extends even to his treatment of the "progressive Marxism" on which he hinges half of the "hope of Western civilization" (23). He devotes just over three pages of text to explication of what he identifies as the "six major streams in the Marxist tradition" (134f). His critique of Marxism for the most part takes as least common denominator a subjectless, "orthodox" variety, the skeleton of a straw man exhumed from a conceptual potters' field (99-101, 114f).

A recapitulation of European philosophy and social theory, however, is not the primary objective of *Prophesy Deliverance!* Rather, West offers it as a *leitmotiv* in his larger project of demonstrating the significance of modern thought in the Afro-American experience. But, notwithstanding the author's insistence on accounting for "the way in which the very structure of modern discourse *at its inception* produced forms of rationality, scientificity and objectivity as well as aesthetic and cultural ideals which require the constitution of the idea of white supremacy" (47), the European connection contributes next to nothing to coexisting manifest or tacit goals of West's volume and mainly parallels its other line of discussion. Even the most substantive and sustained element of the Europocentric discussion, i.e., tracing the sources of racism to the base of "modern discourse" (47-65) accomplishes little. This discussion is touted as a "theoretical inquiry into a particular neglected variable," but its own citations indicate that the "discursive factor" in the "rise of modern racism" is not suffering much neglect. Most of this chapter is a summary of the work of Jordan, Gossett, Mosse, Davis, Montagu and others who in recent years have studied such matters. The summary is sound and probably helpful as an introduction, but it breaks no new interpretive ground.

The inadequacies of West's discussion of the source and structure of "modern discourse" preclude extraction of insights that might inform his larger project. However, the deeper problem is the incommensurability of the two levels on which the argument moves. The history of ideas simply does not flow without mediation into the history of culture as socialization; the book's confounding of the two glosses over the requirement for a mediating historical hermeneutic. As a result, no real connection between them is established; the philosophical dimension suffers from superficiality, while the historical (Afro-American) aspect fails to receive the attention it demands.

Prophesy Deliverance!'s reconstruction of the Afro-American experience reproduces internally the problem of collapsing the two levels of cultural history. In this sphere a critical problem is the book's failure to distinguish the development of the discourses of black intellectuals from the constitution of an Afro-American reality. Thus, West sacrifices much of the significance of his intelligent, illuminating discussion of the currents of black intellectual response to the phenomenon of Afro-Americanization (69-91).

West argues convincingly that forging a collective identity for the race has been a

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priority of Afro-American intellectuals. Still, it is too much to assume that this project has ordered the collective experience of black people in America.

The notion of the "triple crisis of recognition" that West invokes is at best a secondary reconstruction of popular experience filtered through and ordered by intellectuals. But after nearly two decades of chatter about collective identity crisis in the black experience, such claims, to be taken seriously, require more than distilling artistic representations, folkloric artificats and impressionistic essays, however valuable they may be as sources of insight.

One of the strengths of many black academics is their acknowledgement of the significance of internal stratification and differentiation of interests in the black experience. Until recently, attention to this dynamic was scant, in part because black social thought had been structured since the Washington/DuBois controversy by an assumption of the hegemony of elite interests within Afro-American life. Subsequent discourse presupposed an identity of elite and collective agendas, and the intellectual reconstruction of black experience has reproduced that identity.

But the constructions of Afro-Americanization that derive from this view are questionable. To make plausible claims about the genesis of the Afro-American experience requires fresh immersion in social history. West's account suffers because it strays too far from that history. Assertions that Afro-American history is "the story of a gallantly persistent struggle, of a disparate racial group fighting to enter modernity on its own terms" suffice only if we accept DuBois' claim that the history of a people is the history of its "best man." The history of the rest is summed up in Anatole France's dictum: "They were born, they suffered, and they died."

As a record of that "best" history, West's reconstruction of the "Four Traditions of Response" sees cultural definition as a major project of modern black intellectual history. Focus on themes of exceptionalism (claiming the superiority of black culture), assimilationism (denigration of black culture as pathological) and marginality (emphasis of parochial characteristics) is as useful a heuristic as any other for organizing inquiry into the cultural dimension of black thought. West's categorization is insightful both descriptively and critically.

Some of his specific interpretations may generate useful debate. He may, for example, overstate Frazier's role in "almost singlehandedly (setting) in motion a stream of [assimilationist] Afro-American thought and action which remains highly influential today" (79). There is a level on which the programs of DuBois and Washington, both exceptionalists in West's analysis, are assimilationist, insofar as both advocated for black quotidian life an equivalent of the Americanization agenda that their white progressivist allies and patrons directed toward Eastern and Southern European immigrants.[3] Similarly, Baldwin's marginality may not be less enduring than Wright's, only differently enacted; after all, both opted for permanent escape from the American racial situation through European exile. Moreover, the tremendous irony that the "exceptionalist" Renaissance was so largely kept and structured by white patronage may suggest greater ambiguity in the "tradition" than West's categories can express.

These are small points but exemplify the kind of controversy that an interpretation like West's should engender. The fourth of his responses is more problematic, however, and his exposition indicates a failing that gives his book a disingenuously

3. Cf. DuBois' emphasis on development of proper urban-industrial consciousness in *The Philadelphia Negro,* Washington's views on inculcation of consumer consciousness among blacks in his William Levi Bull lecture of 1907 (published in DuBois and Washington, *The Negro in the South*), and Stanley Aronowitz's discussion of the Americanization impetus in *False Promises* (New York, 1973).

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ideological and atavistic tone.

West proclaims the fourth response, the "humanist tradition," simply because he wants there to be one. His examples of it are nearly all teased out of artistic representation. Moreover, the tradition originates in music, a form that, albeit vital, is intellectually mute. The remainder of his explication draws on interpretation of characterizations and themes reconstructed from black fiction. The unintended message is clear; there is no identifiable current of any duration in black social theory that has as its project "promotion of an individuality strengthened by an honest encounter with the Afro-American past and the expansion of democratic control over the major institutions that regulate lives in American and abroad" (90). That there is no such current is a problem for the contemporary black intellectual left, who must create one, but pretending that there is a tradition within which critical discourse can be embedded only makes matters more difficult. Honest confrontation of the dearth of critical black social theory is an essential step in the effort to transcend the present situation. This is not to deny the liberatory characteristics of artistic production. However, as Marcuse showed, art's liberatory moment lies in a different dimension from the moments of emancipation in politics, social theory and philosophy.[4]

More problematic than West's concoction of a humanist tradition is the recurring, shadowy presence of the construct "Afro-American philosophy" or "Afro-American critical thought." Although he defines it (21-22), West offers not one citation of literature to exemplify it. Yet, he discusses it as if it were a fully articulated tendency in black social theory. This misrepresentation may be the product of either confused enthusiasm or intellectual disingenuousness. It is at the same time an atavistic recurrence of the 1960s radicals' proclivity toward arbitrarily manufacturing ideologies, imputing anonymous, nonexistent subjects to them and projecting them onto a (hopefully) naive world as meaningful social realities.

To the extent that this is the tacit project of *Prophesy Deliverance!,* the entire volume crumbles. It is not difficult to imagine that many of the book's theoretical weaknesses are tied to this flaw. If promulgation of a black critical philosophy and legitimation of its authenticity are latent objectives, then creation of a humanist "tradition" is useful; so also is the attempt to establish a connection, even a tenuous one, between Afro-American social thought and the philosophical expression of the "discourse of modernity."

Lastly, *Prophesy Deliverance!* argues for an emancipatory tradition in black Christian theology. I shall restrict my remarks to certain historically problematic aspects of the volume's religious contentions. The black church is much more complicated than West makes it out to be. For one thing, the notion of an independent Afro-American Christianity is itself contradictory. The independent term already is limited by the Christian term. Acceptance of Christianity, after all, is a primary episode in black acculturation in America. The autonomy of the black Christian experience — not to mention its emancipatory potential — is at best quite contingent.

Historically, the black church has by no means been an unambiguously emancipatory institution. Despite the conspicuousness of churchmen within Civil Rights politics, the institutional church also has functioned as an agency for legitimizing black subordination For each of the handful of liberatory theologians that West cites, there have been scores of J.H. Jacksons, T.J. Jimmersons and others who have operated as willing, even enthusiastic, agents of reaction. (In this light, West's claim that black church leadership is free of corporate influence [121] is preposterous.)

4. Herbert Marcuse, *The Aesthetic Dimension* (Boston, 1978).

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Moreover, the expressive "Baptist polity" may well constitute a retrograde force in black life. As Diane Johnson has argued,[5] the tragedy of the People's Temple was in part a logical outcome of the black church's model of submission to charismatic authority. Indeed, even secular politics seem tainted by the personalistic and autocratic leadership style around which the church is organized, as black politicans — who, dating from Adam Clayton Powell, often have had ministerial roots — tend to equate internal criticism with heresy.

West, however, glosses over these problems in the same fashion he has glossed over others. He simply posits a transcendent "black Christian position." This position, which contains the "philosophical methodology of dialectical historicism, the theological worldview of prophetic Christianity, the cultural outlook of Afro-American humanism, and the social theory and political praxis of progressive Marxism" (131), is for West the culmination of the black theological "critique of capitalist civilization" (101). This "Afro-American revolutionary Christianity" is purportedly an immediate outgrowth of an anti-capitalist "stage" of black theology incredibly constituted by two 1977 conference papers (104) and "deepened and sharpened" by two of West's own essays (105).

The main danger in attempting a very ambitious project is described in school yard wisdom: the bigger they are, the harder they fall. *Prophesy Deliverance!* has enormous ambitions; therefore, its failures appear unfortunately ludicrous. As an exposition in critical social theory, it is, for the most part, a very muddled, very superficial book.

On another level, West's effort is instructive inasmuch as it illustrates certain special dilemmas that constrain black intellectuals. Wright, Baldwin, Ellison, Cruse, Frazier, and others[6] all have reflected on the peculiar difficulties that confront blacks who attempt to function within left and intellectual subcultures in the United States. The paucity of institutional bases within the race has structured a situation in which significant audiences and recognition have come largely from outside. As Cruse argued so trenchantly, so long as the material requirements for reproduction of intellectual activity must be sought outside the race (and the drift of American society suggests that autonomous activity may be increasingly *less* likely), the external focus of black intellectuals will override the internal.

This dynamic has helped to undermine development of theoretically coherent black discourse. Nearly two generations ago, W.T. Fontaine observed the stultifying effects produced by a discursive project of validating the racial experience.[7] Critical capacities suffer on two counts: One is reinforcement of a defensive attitude that confines the focus of intellectual pursuit within the ideology of the racial protest agenda. When vindication of a perception of the race's authenticity becomes a self-conscious goal, critical scrutiny yields to the self-serving banalities of propaganda. J.A. Rogers, who devoted years to gathering minutiae to tout black dignity and accomplishment since antiquity (including searching out traces of black blood in famous historical figures), represents the tragic culmination of this tendency. The real need to assert black humanity against racist intellectual conventions cemented protest at the foundation of Afro-American discourse and inhibited development of its theoretical

5. Diane Johnson, "Heart of Darkness," *New York Review of Books* (April 19, 1979), pp. 3ff.

6. Richard Wright in Richard Crossman, ed., *The God that Failed* (New York, 1949); James Baldwin, "Everybody's Protest Novel" and "Many Thousands Gone," both in *Notes of a Native Son* (New York, 1955); Ralph Ellison, "The World and the Jug," in *Shadow and Act* (New York, 1967); E. Franklin Frazier, "The Failure of the Negro Intellectual," *Negro Digest* (1962).

7. William T. Fontaine, " 'Social Determination' in the Writings of Negro Scholars," *American Journal of Sociology* 49 (1944).

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dimension.

At the same time, black intellectuals must seek legitimacy from the external audience because of its primacy as a source of the rewards of status, prestige and income. Success and recognition come to black intellectuals — as leadership status comes to protest activists — by white acclamation.

This dependence on external acknowledgement has exacerbated black intellectuals' identity crisis and often has intensified claims to equal status in a universal intellectual culture. Now, with the study of Afro-American life ghettoized and trivialized in universities, black academics often feel even more pressed to demonstrate that they are not "just" specialists in racial affairs and indeed have broader concerns.

Although this situation can aid in transcending the myopic focus of the racial protest framework, the desire to indicate breadth just as easily can be incorporated into the facile outlook structured by protest discourse. This is the sociological context of West's volume, and roots of some of the book's idiosyncratic weaknesses are illuminated by this: the litanies of renowned and obscure figures in European high culture, the self-important and usually unenlightening notes, the glossy account of the "discourse of modernity" that does not connect with the book's other objectives.

The centrality of the notion "modernity" in West's problematic discloses a theoretical basis of this agenda. In fact, the concept's integrity is dubious. At one level modernity is a shibboleth, an overly abstract catch-all that explains little but the attitude of its exponents. At another level, it is a not always tacit set of idealized instructions for reproduction of the industrial culture of the West. In both cases, "modernity" hypostatizes selected episodes of the last two or three centuries of Euroamerican history as the apotheosis of world history. Uncritical acceptance of this notion is at the same time acceptance of the hegemony of the bourgeois West. For the rest of the world, including proletarianized Europeans, modernity has been the signature of domination.

Moreover, the framework of modernity as an orienting problematic reinforces the identity crisis and status insecurity experienced by the Afro-American intellectual. Similarly, identification of the spread of "dispersive practices" among blacks as an "index of progress" (43-44) reveals the ideological nature of this notion of modernity. Why do black discovery and enactment of novel "business ventures, . . . geographic locations and sexual experimentations" constitute "progress" and not simply environmentally structured changes in the group?

Much of West's concrete discussion of Afro-American intellectual history is intelligent and engaging. Moreover, as an artifact, *Prophesy Deliverance!* stands in spirit, if not in content, with a potentially invigorating, recent black intellectual epicycle that seeks to interpret Afro-American life in the context of developing industrial capitalist culture. But in its haste to make good on its extravagant and unlikely promises, the book confounds is and ought, to the detriment of smaller, more plausible and generally interesting claims made along the way.

Adolph Reed, Jr.

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Richard Barnet, *The Alliance: America-Europe-Japan, Makers of the Post-War,* (N.Y.: Simon & Schuster), 511 pp., $19.95.

Stanley Hoffman, *Dead Ends: American Foreign Policy in the New Cold War,* (Cambridge: Ballinger), 299 pp., $24.50.

Adam B. Ulam, *Dangerous Relations: The Soviet Union in World Politics, 1970-1982,* (N.Y. Oxford University Press), 325 pp., $25.00.

Le Monde's financial analyst Paul Fabra captured the essence of the Western "Alliances' " difficulties in an article describing European reactions to Carter and Reagan economic policies. Under Carter he noted, the U.S. initially followed an expansionary policy of low interest rates and increased public spending driving the dollar downward. The cheaper dollar increased both American exports to Europe and European complaints about American competition. Reagan reversed course and the Europeans had a different, though equally intense set of grievances. "The fact is," concluded Fabra, "Europe is uncomfortable with a strong or weak dollar." He might have said a strong or weak America. The West Germans, for instance, are divided about whether it is the Reagan buildup or the threat of an American military withdrawal which threatens them most. France was uncomfortable with both the Soviet-American co-operation of the early 70s which raised fears of a new "Yalta", a super-power deal made behind their back and the renewed tensions which threaten, if not war, than the expansion of East-West trade. It is in Europe's interest, as Barnet points out in *The Alliance,* to have a mixed Soviet-American relation which gives the old continent freedom to maneuver as the balancing force between the powers. For a Europe in pursuit of breathing space each successive American president "has achieved new standards of unpopularity."

Leverage, the attempt by the European "allies" to play East against West did not begin, as many American conservatives would have it, when the serpent of détente slithered into the garden of trans-Atlantic friendship. Barnet's book is a rich account of how the European search for leverage transformed the trans-Atlantic love affair into what is at best a marriage of convenience. It was, Barnet points out, John Foster Dulles' good friend Adenauer, who spoke at times of the need to play the Russians and the Americans off against each other. Both Adenauer and his rival, socialist Kurt Schumacher, tried to paint one another as a "jackal of the conqueror." Referring to the SPD close ties to the British Labor Party Adenauer accused the SPD of being the "Royal British Social Democratic Party," much as the SPD today accuses Kohl of playing "deputy sheriff' to Reagan. German nationalism was never totally out of style.

By the early 1960s all West German parties were interested in renewed contacts with the Soviet bloc. The *Ostpolitik* later associated with Brandt can be dated to the opening years of the decade when Adenauer's successor, Ludwig Erhard, began the policy of "little steps" which led to an exchange of trade missions with Poland. While the government moved cautiously, the Krupp conglomerate, whose founder Alfred Krupp had sold his earliest steel cannons to the Tsar, began to reclaim its eastern markets. Today, the company literature boasts that Krupp was a proponent of *Ostpolitik* long before the term was even coined, and in the mid 60s Kosygin half-jokingly called upon Krupp to reorganize the Soviet economy. It was SPD leader Willy Brandt who privately expressed support for the American war in Vietman while publicly chastizing Adenauer as a German "Gaullist" who threatened West Germany's close ties the U.S.

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In *Dangerous Relations*, Ulam points out that trade between West Germany and the USSR increased ten-fold between 1970 and 1976. Trade between West Germany and the East bloc, as a whole, tripled during the 1970s and this does not include the substantial intra-German trade, which in accordance with Common Market rules allows East German goods shipped to West Germany to be treated as if they were produced by a member of the European Economic Community. Giscard's former trade minister Jean-Francois Deniau argues that the Common Market made "a terrible mistake in allowing Germany to be treated as a whole. We were supposed to be tying Germany to the West," he says, "but by allowing the East in, we did not completely succeed." If anything, West Germany is likely to increase its dependence on Eastern markets in the 1980s. Lagging far behind the U.S. and Japan in the new high-tech industries, West Germany has become increasingly dependent on COMECON purchases of its old line but traditionally high quality steel and chemical exports.

Bonn's attempt to both expand its Eastern trade and as a faithful NATO ally engage in an arms buildup has confused the German public. Or as Barnet puts it viewing the dilemma from a political perspective, "Since 1967 the alliance (has been) charged with negotiating with the Russians and preparing for a war against them simultaneously, a conventional enough idea in the world of strategic logic, but a difficult feat in the real world of political psychology." Mobilizing a democracy to man a permanent battle line over a generation or more, he goes on, "was hard enough, but opening up the lines to send through food, money and technology to the ideological enemy . . . exceeded the tolerable limits of political confusion."

The difficulties are exacerbated by the problem of providing Europe with a military defense against an enemy who does not seem interested in dirt conquest. In fact, a direct Soviet assault seems so unlikely that Western military commanders often have a hard time devising a convincing Russian attack scenario to use for war game maneuvers. Rather than directly threatening invasion, Moscow, as Ulman points out, has played a subtle game. Western Europe, he says, "was to be persuaded of the Soviet's peaceful intentions while at the same time impressed by Moscow's growing military might. The average German, Dutchman, etc., was thus expected to feel that Moscow meant no harm to his country, yet still be frightened by Soviet power . . . These mixed feelings would be translated into the pressure of public opinion upon the Western Governments not to tie themselves too closely to the erratic policy of the U.S. so as to avoid provoking the essentially peaceful (though dangerous if aroused) Soviet colossus."

By the early 70s Moscow had more than enough military power to cow the Europeans. Why then, install the SS-20s? The real purpose of those missiles, Richard Lowenthal explains, is to undermine the credibility of an American nuclear retaliation against a Soviet conventional threat. The proper response to this challenge, says Barnet, is an increase in Europe's conventional forces. Here Barnet agrees with one of the central documents of the Cold War, NSC-68, which insisted in 1950 that it was "imperative to avoid an excessive reliance on nuclear weapons." Despite their superior economic capacity — the GNPs of France and West Germany alone equal that of the USSR — West Europeans have consistently refused to reduce their dependence on inexpensive, largely American nuclear weapons with the buildup of an expensive but conventional deterrent. Many West Germans, but the SPD in particular, are admantly opposed to a conventional buildup which, they argue, would be unduly provocative to the Russians. But, at the same time, they insist that the U.S. maintain its nuclear umbrella or what Barnet calls "the American insurance policy." These same Germans want to shift the balance of risk within the alliance by eliminating theater nuclear weapons stationed in

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Germany while returning to a policy of massive retaliation based on missiles stationed in the U.S., whereby America risks total devastation for any attack on West Germany. This is clearly untenable in a time of super-power nuclear parity. It is an insurance policy which not only is the U.S. unlikely to honor, but which is bound, as Congressman Les Aspin has warned, to produce a harsh reaction once it is fully understood by the American public.

In *Dead Ends* Hoffman directs most of his fire at the failings of American foreign policy but has shrewd comments on his former European compatriots. He derides Europeans (without mentioning by name Germans like SPD defense spokesman Erhard Eppler) who are convinced "that the defense of Europe and neutralization of any Soviet threat against it will always remain in essential American interest," Hoffman describes the contention of the peace movement that the installation of Pershing and Cruise was part of a design for limited nuclear war in Europe as having an "Alice in Wonderland quality." "Protesters in Europe," he points out, "often seem to believe simultaneously that a Soviet attack would escalate (and is therefore unlikely) and that America's plans could keep destruction limited to the continent." But Hoffman is sympathetic, as are Barnet and Ulam, to the plight of Europe for which even conventional war spells destruction. "People who are in an impossible position," says Hoffman, "or in a position in which the only outcome — peace — seems increasingly unlikely, tend to react with a mix of illusions, resentment and inconsistencies, because the grammar of emotions has nothing to do with the logic of the mind."

What will save Europeans, he argues, is their superior diplomatic skills. Here Hoffman is in accord with both Barnet and Ulam in insisting that a more effective diplomacy is the key to restraining the Russians. But where Ulam recounts the price paid by the Carter administration for what the Russians saw as an over eagerness to negotiate, and while Barnet despairs of an alliance required to simultaneously negotiate and prepare for war, Hoffman insists that if the Alliance can be freed from American "simplicity" and placed in the hands of European "complexity," it can negotiate effectively with the Russians. An alliance freed of American missionary anti-communism could, he argues, "mix competition and restraints, containment and co-operation, deterrence and preventive diplomacy," to effectively manage the Soviet drive for status and power. But can even the Europeans live up to Hoffman's ideal? After all, it was their self-chosen over-reliance on nuclear weaponry that led directly to the wide spread opposition to atomic weaponry.

Even old-world wisdom will fail, says Hoffman, unless Europeans give up both "the cheap pleasures of mere bitching" about the U.S. and the temptation to pose as mediators between East and West — an unlikely event. Similarly, he warns that any offer of a division of labor in which "the Europeans do business as usual with Moscow and the Arabs while the U.S. is left to guard Europe's oil supplies will surely sunder the relationship." possibly, Hoffman fears a repeat of the ugly developments following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war when our "partners" asked the Arabs to hold back American oil supplies least their disloyal of Israel and U.S. policies be seen as pointless.

Hoffman's solution for NATO's problems is a permanent secretariat to smooth over conflicts and co-ordinate policy. But an organizational rearrangement would only change the locus debate without addressing the underlying differences of interest. Barnet is not sure a reorganization would be worth the effort. He is far more skeptical than Hoffman of NATO's role in restraining the Russians who he regards as largely self-restrained. But in an interesting twist, Barnet is nonetheless sympathetic to greater U.S. European co-operation on the grounds that it would serve to curb U.S. adven-

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turism. For Ulam this possibility has already arrived. Sarcastically, he notes that: "One might have said that the era of containment had returned, but with a difference . . . It was the United States that for the moment was being contained; its own allies were rebuffing, in deeds, if not words, its policies vis-à-vis the USSR . . . it was (for the West Europeans) not Soviet actions (in Afganistan) but the American reaction to them that appeared to many to endanger peace and détente."

DeGaulle is supposed to have said that "Treaties are like maidens and roses, they each have their day." In the short run NATO is unlikely to go the way of SEATO and CENTO, but in the long run, the alliance is unlikely to contain either the US or the USSR. Like the 39 articles of the Church of England, NATO is likely to survive not because it commands belief, but because no one can think of what to replace it with. In part, what makes this crisis of the alliance different from its antecedents is that at the same time the cumulative blows of past conflicts are taking their toll, Europe is facing an unprecedented and interrelated set of post-war problems.

"Vietman", said Susan Sontag on returning from Hanoi, "offered the key to a systematic criticism of America." In West Germany, the German-American relation provides the string with which to tie together the anti-rearmament protests of the 1950s, the anti-Vietman demonstrations of the 1960s, the environmental compaign of the 1960s and the current missile issue. When puzzled American commentators ask West Germans why they are so angry about the Pershings, but acquiescent on the SS20s, they usually receive standard litany about the flight time of the American missile, obscuring the underlying mental linkage between the weapon and the changed attitude toward an America which has become the symbol and to some extent the scapegoat for all that has gone wrong in post-war Germany. Ecological destruction, the breakdown of the traditional, almost feudal rural social order, the problems of national identity and the dangers of catastrophic war of the sort of the SPD failed to prevent in 1914, or worse, are all represesnted by the American army buying up German farmland, tearing it up for military maneuvers or building a giant PX filled with consumer goods, all while the rowdy GI's enjoy a degree of extre-territoriality. All of this has led the Greens to accuse "the hegemonic power" of not only "occupying our country but our very bodies as well." America stands accused of alienating Germany from its lost brother in the East as well as a refurbished image of its past.

Barnet notes that much of the anti-American rhetoric is in fact imported from the U.S., implying unity even in conflict. But while the rhetoric of protest may be similar, the mixture of Prussian (reunification) and pacifist themes is peculiarly German brew. Barnet fails to quote Brandt advisor Egon Bahr who warned that "if a German tells you that the national question is no longer important, do no be so sure. Do not believe him. Either he is dumb or he is not telling the truth, and both positions are dangerous." 19th century nationalist intellectuals spoke of the "forging of nations," a phrase which, as in the case of the infamous Stern diaries, takes on a second meaning in contemporary Germany. Willy Brandt's son Peter, an outspoken peace activist who earlier organized an exhibit on the past greatness of Prussia has now co-authored a book with the nationalist historian Helmut Diwald who is unswervingly devoted to reunification. Diwald writes uncritically of the splendor of German history while leaving the reader in doubt about whether the Holocaust ever occured.

The cultural turmoil of Germany and to a lesser extent England is compounded by European economic weakness further exacerbated by demographic trends. There has actually been a job shrinkage in Western Europe. The old continent has fully 3 million less jobs now than it did a decade ago. And "failing industries," as Giles Merrit of the

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Financial Times of London puts it, "are collapsing just at the point when young people, the product of the 1960s baby boom across Europe, are seeking work in unprecedented number." It is in the context of these pressures that the failure of the 1983 GATT (General Agreement on Trade and Tariffs) to reduce European-American trade tensions takes on new meanings. For the better part of the past three years the "allies" have been trading charges of European export subsidies to agriculture and American restrictions on specialty steel. The French, for instance, have not so far been willing to react toward American imports as they have toward foreign snails, each of which had to be given a health inspection to enter the country, but that is increasingly a question of French fears of an American troops withdrawal from Europe.

In July of 1967, as Barnet describes it, a combination of American hawks (angered over European criticism of American imperialism in Vietnam) and doves mustered 49 votes for the Mansfield Amendment which called for major American troop withdrawals from Europe. Four years later in 1971 a similar proposal from Senate Majority leader Mansfield to cut US troops in Europe by half was defeated only "after the entire stable of NATO warhorses — Acheson, McCloy, and Generals Clay, Greunther, Norstad, and Lemnitzer — had been pressed into service as lobbyists, and the Soviets had, much to Kissinger's amazement, suddenly taken the steam out of the campaign for unilateral withdrawal by calling for mutual reductions."

Mansfield's insistence in 1981 that America's "future is (in Asia) and not in the Atlantic" took on new meaning in 1983 when for the first time American trade with Asia surpassed that with Europe. Meanwhile, in congress a new coalition of doves and hawks raise new questions about our commitments to Europe. Doves ask how, at a time of vast defecits and declining social services, we can spend more than half of our bloated military budget (according to Barnet's reckoning) on behalf of a Europe unwilling to spend enough money to defend itself conventionally. Hawks like South Dakota's Senator Larry Pressler speak in the old isolationist language of a Europe so tired and enfeebled as to be possibly not worth defending. For his part, Majority Leader Howard Baker said he resisted pressures to reintroduce the Mansfield amendment because "Were I to do it, I'm afraid it would start a fire I couldn't put out."

The Atlantic Alliance was the product of European weakness and a bi-partisan American foreign policy managed by men with strong European ties. But Europe is no longer weak, bi-partisanship was shattered by Vietnam, and the founding fathers of NATO have been succeeded by men too young to have engaged in the common fight against the Nazis. No matter what happens in U.S. politics, America's relation with Europe will become increasingly problematic. If the Alleance is to be preserved, the balance of risk and responsibility among the partners has to be renegotiated before the US, in one of its predictable fits of pique, precipitously withdraws from Europe.

Fred Siegel

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Hubert Dreyfus and Paul Rabinow, *Michel Foucault: Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics*, with an afterword by Michel Foucault (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1982), pp. xxiii 231.

Foucault's works, according to Dreyfus and Rabinow, "represent the most important contemporary effort both to develop a method for the study of human beings and to diagnose the current situation of our society" (p. xiii). They conclude that his position is ". . . the most powerful, plausible, and honest option available" (p. 125). I must confess that I agree with them in both judgments.

There is an inescapable methodological conundrum in writing a book, especially a sympathetic one, on Michel Foucault, Foucault's method calls for constituting unities of discourse on the basis of disciplines, not individual authors. He presents strong arguments for his case in the *Archeology of Knowledge* and he exemplifies his position in his concrete studies, most notably in books on the clinic, sex and prisons. The authorial subject, he argues, is not an adequate pivot of intelligibility. It is in the nature of discursive formations that the individual not be aware of the rules that constitute the statements made in the text. In addition, critical theory, Foucault contends, requires the investigator to examine his or her subject matter in a manner that undercuts the claim of the human sciences to have "man" as their subject. The role of the intellectual is to constitute and describe technologies of power at play in the social system which shape and constrain the individual but which cannot be derived from an analysis of the individual at the subjective or objective level.

Dreyfus and Rabinow are completely aware of these arguments and yet they have written a book which is organized by the chronological appearance of Foucault's books and, above all, which takes as one of its major themes the unity, consistency and development of these texts. Part I of *Michel Foucault* treats *Madness and Civilization, The Birth of the Clinic, The Order of Things* and *The Archeology of Knowledge.* Part II treats *Discipline and Punish* and *The History of Sexuality.* The book focuses on the *Archeology* as the unifying pivot of Foucault's work. The *Archeology* attempts to develop a method that gathers the advances of the earlier books and opens a path for future development. Dreyfus and Rabinow demonstrate convincingly the limitations of the *Archeology* and delineate the ways in which the later books on prisons and sex turn away from the *Archeology* and develop a new method (genealogy) which resolves many of the difficulties of the *Archeology.* As a study of Foucault's texts, this organizational scheme is sensible and convincing. As an example of Foucauldean criticism it flounders in self-contradiction.

There is a second way in which the problem of the subject as the unity of discourse intrudes on the project of Dreyfus and Rabinow. One can avoid or at least minimize the central role of the subject by situating the individual author in a context of inquiry that is larger than one figure. Foucault's work could be illuminated in relation to the work of others, specifically Sartre, Deleuze, Habermas, Baudrillard, Lyotard, Althusser, Poulantzas, Lacan, Bataille and Derrida. Yet these names appear rarely or not at all in the Dreyfus/Rabinow book. The first part does work systematically and interestingly with the positions of Heidegger and Searle and there is some mention of Merleau-Ponty in the second part. Yet the general thinness of contextual insertion accentuates unnecessarily the uniqueness and originality of Foucault in a way that undermines the critical import of his position, along with that of Dreyfus/Rabinow. In the end there is an unwanted suggestion of an intellectual star who is being highlighted at the expense of other luminaries.

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Let me be clear, Dreyfus and Rabinow do not intend this result. In fact the book is anything but a glorification of Foucault. It is sympathetic but critical as well. The book is written in a spirit of open and on-going inquiry to which Foucault's contribution is important but not absolute. The book concludes with a list of questions for further inquiry, taking the problematics initiated by Foucault beyond his particular achievements. Certainly we are not dealing with hagiography. And yet the method of investigation followed by Rabinow and Dreyfus not only violates the principles developed by Foucault, ones with which they agree (but which I am afraid will serve for many to inflame ongoing polemics, with Marxists and Derrideans to cite two examples) and detract from the substantive questions. And that would be too bad because the book makes an excellent case for positions which happen to be enunciated by Foucault, ones that do much to further the case for a renewed critical theory of society. Let me say also that I draw attention to these problems without having any sure remedies for them.

The argument of the book can be ascertained from the subtitle "Beyond Structuralism and Hermeneutics." Dreyfus/Rabinow set Foucault's work in the arena of dispute over epistemology or interpretive strategy. They argue that Foucault has struggled with and extricated himself from the limitations of structuralism and hermeneutics. With regard to the former position the issues are clear. Foucault claims he was never a structuralist and yet there are stucturalist tendencies in his work, especially in *The Order of Things* and *The Archeology,* tendencies which cannot be gainsaid. Foucault's relation to hermeneutics is less clearcut. It is true that some of his earlier work concerned a form of Heideggerian psychology, that of Binswanger. But it is hard to locate a sustained interest in Heideggerian hermeneutics in Foucault's writings. In fact the Heideggerian perspective is brought to the discussion by Dreyfus/Rabinow rather than being found there already in Foucault's texts; but it is done so most successfully.

Dreyfuss/Rabinow discover in Foucault's texts a position they call interpretive anaylytics. They define this position as ". . . a special kind of history that focuses on the cultural practices that have made us what we are" (p. 122). The investigator studies cultural practices with a combination of involvement and distance, an involvement that refutes the scientific detachment of the structuralist and a distance which rejects the hermeneuticist's sharing of the actor's meaning. Interpretive analytics preserves a "foothold" with which to study human affairs, but one that is pruned of all forms of rationalist hubris: it is not "universal, guaranteed, verified, or grounded." It is a minimalist position, having come to terms with the Nietzschean critique of traditional metaphysics, but one that is still "serious," a favorite term of the authors, not merely "playful" (do they mean Derrida?). Foucault's interpretive analytics remains in pursuit of meaning and truth but rejects every traditional and accepted basis for doing so.

Although the intention of interpretive analytics provides the most advanced methodology available, Foucault's practice of the strategy remains flawed and imperfect, Dreyfus/Rabinow tell us. Foucault has not completely escaped from the dangers that threaten all efforts to provide a ground for knowledge. These dangers, as defined by Foucault himself and analyzed by Dreyfus/Rabinow, are the "doubles" (like the Kantian antinomies?) of the empirical and the transcendental, the cogito and the unthought, and the retreat and return of the origin. In his effort to elude the doubles Foucault has refused to theorize his own position and to provide the background practices out of which his position emerges. Foucault does not, for example, call his own position "interpretive analytics" or provide a sustained effort at defining it. In the end, therefore, many questions remain unanswered, questions concerning the resolution of

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the dilemmas of the doubles. Dreyfus/Rabinow conclude as follows:

"In each set [of the doubles] there is a seeming contradiction between a return to the traditional philosophic view that description and interpretation ultimately must correspond to the way things really are, and a nihilist view that physical reality, the body and history are whatever we take them to be. We have constructed these questions — and this book — so as to demonstrate how Foucault has sought to avoid embracing either or both of these formulations. His project has been an adroit demarcation of the course to be pursued and a skillful avoidance of the responses traditionally or currently given to these problems. His "concrete demonstrations" have marked out a terrain. But they cannot be accepted as a fully satisfactory map . . . Foucault's ascetic refusal to go beyond his concrete demonstrations, while consistent and even admirable, does not make the questions disappear; nor does it fuly satisfy our perhaps still traditional desire to have a picture of the course" (p. 205).

Foucault has written an afterword to this book entitled "The Subject and Power." Even here Foucault does not take the occasion to comment on the conclusion of Dreyfus/Rabinow or respond to their suggestion that his position can be characterized as interpretive analytics. Instead he chooses to write about the relative significance of the concepts of power and the subject in his works, arguing that his recent work is an effort to explore the theme of the self-constitution of the subject through discourses rather than to develop any theory of power.

The Dreyfus/Rabinow study of Foucault's thought is excellent in many ways: it presents a rigorous investigation of Foucault's epistemological and methodological positions; it relates these to a strong analysis of the recent studies of discipline and sex; it does so in an admirable tone of sympathetic skepticism that encourages the reader seriously to reexamine Foucault's positions. My only major reservation about the book concerns the priority it gives to questions of interpretation over politics. Critical theory begins not with a systematic effort to avoid the dilemmas of epistemology, although that is most important, but with the requirements of an adequate stance against domination. Dreyfus/Rabinow do not ignore the issue of politics; they simply subordinate it to the problem of an adequate method of interpretation. As a result their book situates itself in contemporary philosophical debates and downplays the strategic position of Foucault in the arena of political theory. The human sciences are the chief question, not human practices. In the end the book tends to put into the shadows the important position of Foucault in relation to the Frankfurt School and to the traditions and issues of Western Marxism more generally.

The salient question not raised in the book is the adequacy of Foucault's position for a critique of advanced capitalist society. Here the issue that must be posted is the interplay between recent transformations of social practices and Foucault's intellectual strategies. Dreyfus/Rabinow raise the question but do not explore it in any systematic way. For example, to what extent is Foucault's analysis of disciplinary society an advance over Marx's theory of the mode of production? Or again, is *The History of Sexuality* an adequate perspective on recent changes in libidinal economy? Also and most importantly are the transformations of communicational and linguistic practices embodied in the electronic and informational media the "background practices" of Foucault's work? These are the sorts of questions that emerge when the priorities of politics and truth are reversed in the examination of Foucault's texts. Nonetheless Dreyfus/Rabinow have accomplished much in the clarification of Foucault's positions and in the exploration of the issues they raise.

Mark Poster

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Benedict Anderson, *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*, (London: New Left Books, 1983).

Anderson defines the modern nation as an *imagined community* inherently *limited* and *sovereign.* These communities are *imagined* because their members never get to know each other (due to their size) while having an image of a bond. Thus, all communities too large to allow face-to-face contact between all members are necessarily imagined. Nations are imagined as *limited* because they have bounderies, and as *sovereign* because they are politically articulated in the modern sovereign state. Last, they are imagined as *communities* because they are always perceived in terms of a strong horizontal comradeship.

Anderson locates the roots of these new communities in these two cultural systems constituting the boundaries of pre-capitalist social space: the religious community and the dynastic realm. The great religious communities, such as Christianity or Islam, were imagined through the sacred but silent languages of their God-sanctioned written tests. The sacred language was a truth-language. Its privileged position depended on the non-arbitrariness of its signs — a fact which distinguishes it from modern, *'national'* languages which are all equally distant from God, and thus capable of translation. The sacred language of the religious community reflected not equi-distance but a hierarchical and centripetal structure. The Readers of Latin mediated between heaven and earth. The "unselfconscious coherence" of these religious communities was undermined by the gradual erosion of Latin's hegemony during the 16th century, as well as the discovery and exploration of the non-European world. The awareness of a multiplicity of religions marked the foundation of a territorialization of faith.

The structure of the dynastic realm was organized around a high centre, occupied by the figure of the King. Legitimacy within this arrangement derived from God, not from the population. While under modern systems state sovereignty is distributed evenly over the entire territory, the state of the dynastic realm was defined by and from the center. As a result, its borders were blurred and sovereignties faded imperceptibly into one another. For well-known reasons (the rise of a merchant bourgeoisie and the need for a new organization of political power, etc.) the monarchy began to wane during the 17th century.

As Anderson points out, it is not simply the case that, once these older forms of community lost their cohesive power, nations developed in some organic manner. Rather, fundamental changes were necessary in the ways the world was perceived in order to create the very possibility to *think* the nation. One important change that occurred was in the different conceptions of time: whereas pre-modern notions of time were based on the idea of *simultaneity* of the past and future in an instantaneous present, modern time became, in Walter Benjamin's words, *homogeneous, empty time.* Simultaneity is "transverse, cross-time, marked not by prefiguring and fulfillment, but by temporal coincidence, and measured by clock and calendar" (p. 30). According to Anderson, this *new* time is expressed in two forms during the 18th century: the novel and the newspaper, both of which provided, for the first time, the technical means to "represent" the nation. The novel does so by "plotting" characters within a shared time-space: "The idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history. An American will never meet, or even know the names of more than a handful of his 240,000,000-odd fellow Americans. He has no idea of what they are up to at any one time. But he has complete

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confidence in their steady, anonymous, simultaneous activity" (p. 31). Again, with the newspaper the connection of the various items on its pages are not provided by some inner necessity or logical connection but by their calendrical coincidence and by the fact that they are consumed in the form of a mass ceremony, i.e., read in private by a mass population within a well-specified time.

If print-as-commodity (books are the first mass-produced commodities) thus made horizontal-secular, transverse-time communities possible, the question remains: why was this change expressed through nation-ness? The answer Anderson finds in the interaction of three factors: 1) a system of production based on capitalist relations; 2) a technology of communications, dominated by the press; 3) the fatality of human linguistic diversity, i.e., the fact that man's general linguistic unification is impossible. It was thus the newly invented print-languages (vernaculars that for the first time appeared in writing *on a mass scale)* that laid the basis for national consciousness in three ways: first, they created a unified field of exchange and communication "below Latin" and "above the spoken vernaculars" whereby "fellow-readers" formed the embryo of the nationally-imagined communities; second, print-capitalism gave language a new fixity, thus lending an image of antiquity to cultures, so central to the idea of a nation; third, print-languages created languages-of-power that differed from the older administrative vernaculars in that they created a hierarchy of dialects.

It is with this theoretical model of 'nation-ness' that Anderson sets out to look at three different nations spread out over four distinct historical phases, where the last phase since WW II seems to be a combination of the three types.

Remembering that nation-ness depended on print-capitalism, it is surprising to find that the first wave of nation-formation, which Anderson locates not in Europe but in the Americas, did not have language as an issue. It developed, rather, within administrative units in the colonies peopled by a creole class (whites born in the colonies) with little chance of social advancement save within the local bureaucracy. This class sought independence from the mother-country in nation-ness. How, Anderson asks, did these units take on a national meaning? The answer lies not in the creation of a specifically creole print-language but in the *"journey"* as the meaning-creating experience that lead to the imagination of a new type of community. The model of journey relevant in this instance is that of the pilgrimage: "the most important [of modern pilgrimages] were the differing passages created by the rise of absolutizing monarchies; and, eventually, Europe-centered world-imperial states. The inner thrust of absolutism was to create a unified apparatus of power, controlled directly by, and loyal to, the ruler *over against* a decentralized, particularistic feudal nobility. Unification meant internal interchangeability of men and documents. Human interchangeability was fostered by the recruitment . . . of *homines novi*, who, just for that reason, had no independent power of their own, and thus could serve as emanations of their masters' wills. Absolutist functionaries thus undertook journeys which were basically different from those of feudal nobles" (p. 56). Thus, while the nobleman had his landed estate as his base — the trip to the monarchical center always being one with a round-trip ticket, so to speak — the functionary travelled in a looped spiral to (hopefully) the top echelons of the absolutist bureaucracy. For creole functionaries in the colonies this model journey did not apply: the pilgrimage of these functionaries was barred towards the top ranks of the empirial bureaucracy and laterally to the other administrative units within the Empire. What gave these limited pilgrimages their meaning were fellow-travellers who, together, could recognize the fatality of their birth as creoles. Along with the arrival of print-capitalism, these territorial stretches delineated by the pilgrimage came to be imagined as nations.

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The situation is different in Europe: here language played a major formative role during early 19th century nationalist movements. The multiplicity of *national* languages and their expression in print is, for Anderson, a major component in the creation of national consciousness between 1820 and 1920. Crucial in this context is the idea of a "private-property" conception of language (Herder's notion that every people has *its own* language). Based in the discovery of a multiplicity of languages and cultures, and the concomitant rise of comparative history and linguistics. But if all languages had the same status, then who should study them? The native speaker and reader, says Anderson, and the native lexicographers, philologists, grammarians and folklorists, all of which saw their disciplines formed during the 18th century, and all of which were intimately linked to the print-market and consuming publics: the families of the local reading classes. Why were these developments so important for nation-formation? The answer lies in the fact that it was this common readership that became a crucial factor of cohesion. Whereas pre-bourgeois families had found their principle of cohesion in kinship, clientelism and personal loyalties, the bourgeoisie, a class which came into existence only in replication (one factory-owner existed just like the other, but they did not *therefore* know each other), only had an *image* of itself and its members through print-language. It is for this reason that an illiterate bourgeoisie is hardly imaginable. The bourgeoisie is thus the first class to achieve solidarity on an *imagined* basis, where the limit of this imagined community is the language's legibility.

The late 19th century and early 20th century saw a third variation of national movement: an official nationalism "from above" (Germany, Austria-Hungary, Russia, etc.) in reaction to 19th century popular national movements in Europe. They are similar to Bismarck's social reforms: i.e., a way to stem the tide of growing social demands from below.

The last version of nationalism comprises all three other types. Thus, of the new states established since WW II, some had European languages of state (the American model), some attained independence on the basis of an ardent populism (the model of European linguistic nationalism), and some were based on a "Russifying" policy (official nationalism). All of the new states, however, arose as a response to a colonial capitalism requiring a vastly expanded state apparatus, and hence the education and induction of natives into these growing structures. Hence, the interlock between these new educational and administrative pilgrimages provided the territorial base for the newly imagined communities where the local, newly-formed intelligentsia could see itself in national terms.

Anderson concludes with an analysis of the relation between nationalism (and patriotism) and racism. He claims that racism is basically antithetical to nationalism because the nation was from the start conceived through language, not blood. And because anyone can learn any language, there is always the possibility of being invited into the imagined community (e.g. through "naturalization"). Racism and anti-semitism have their roots in *class*, not in the nation; they function in terms of contamination rather than historical destiny; and racism develops *within* national boundaries, not across them, and is therefore a tool of *internal* repression.

Anderson wants a materialist definition of the modern nation in contraposition to idealist conceptions that have dominated liberal literature (e.g., Hans Kohn's nationalism as a *state of mind)*, but one that does not succumb to economic reductionism (e.g., the reduction of national existence to the capitalist need for a unified internal market). Yet, Anderson ends up seeing the nation as a *mode of existence,* a state of mind (a

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community imagined within a new time matrix) determined by a particular *mode of production* (the prerequisites of print-capitalism or the economic aspirations of the creole class). Anderson's description of homogeneous, empty time and its concomitant expression in the modern novel and the newspaper, along with the creation of a sense of anonymous simultaneity, is useful in defining the modern nation. But Anderson's analysis ultimately focuses on the drives of either a particular branch of capitalism, the print industry (when language is considered to be important) or of an economic class (the creole class). Print-capitalism creates the boundaries of print-language; in fact, the two are virtually co-extensive. The creoles become a nation because they see themselves as such and because they are in fact united by their class situation. But this begs the question. What was at stake in South and North America was the entry of the creole classes into the royal state bureaucracy, *not* linguistic identity. So why do these classes imagine themselves as *nation*? Why do they not, once conscious of the similarity of their position, simply imagine themselves as a class or even a *state*? How is this an unprecedented community and not simply the reproduction of an absolutist state on the smaller scale?

Although Anderson believes that the nation as imagined community can be established by a dominant class *against* "the people" (as he clearly points out in the South Amercian case), "the people" must also be a crucial ingredient providing the modern nation's historical specificity. For instance, after the Mutiny of 1857 in the Indian Subcontinent, the Muslim fraction of the local upper classes came to establish itself as a separate (non-Hindu) class with specific demands for power-sharing. The Muslims thus came to view themselves in the very ways described by Anderson as travelling on a pilgrimage of limitations due to birth (religion) that could only be changed if their separate identity was recognized and accepted. What is important here, however, is that the Muslims did *not* see themselves as a nation. The question of Pakistan did not arise until years later. Neither Pakistan existed as a meaningful entity , nor did the Pakistani people. And, yet, within the space of a very short time they were created seemingly out of nowhere.

The problem hinges on two related questions. First, the question of inclusion and exclusion, i.e., not only the establishment of boundaries *against* the outside but also the *creation* of an homogeneous and continuous inside. Second, the question of the distinction between state and nation, i.e., between the spheres of influence and operation of both. What links these two problems together is power. This is the most important question not discussed by Anderson: how is the nation constituted by power-relations and how does it constitute, reproduce and maintain them? It is here that the question of the "people" as national citizens (as opposed to the "subjects" of absolutism) comes into play.

If the nation is intimately tied to the exercise of power in a specifically modern way, then one must also ask where this power is exercised and by whom? The liberal tradition answers that nation-ness is a "state of mind" that collectively expresses the ideals of liberty, equality and fraternity as a present, a past and hopefully a future. In this sense, power exists in nation-ness only in its transgression, i.e., when it goes "too far" and when it denies those very ideals it normally supports. Thus, ideally nation-ness is located in individual national citizens — a situation of equilibrium that must be guaranteed by the state but that can potentially be disrupted and corrupted by that very state. Opposed to this *consensus model* of the nation there is the Marxist one that locates national power squarely with the bourgeoisie and, by extension, with the capitalist state: the nation creates a unified market, loyal citizens (steeped in false con-

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sciousness) and/or it expresses, through its boundaries, the uneven development of the capitalist mode of production.

Anderson seems to combine these two approaches: the nation exists both as a state of mind (an "imagined community" where power obtains only in transgressions) *and* as an expression of bourgeois power (the functional needs of capitalist industry to create and control new markets). The result of this combination is that, although Anderson attempts to break away from simplistic culturalist and/or economistic assumptions about the modern nation, he ends by doing precisely that because of his failure to articulate the relation between power and nation.

Suzanne Stewart Sweet

Agnes Heller, ed., *Lukács Revalued* (London: Basil Blackwell, 1983)

Anthologies are often inherently problematical entities. They commonly suffer from two debilitating deficiencies: unevenness in the quality of the contributions and the lack of a common theoretical framework. As far as the latter difficulty is concerned, rarely will perspectival diversity sufficiently compenstate for the concomitant dearth of any conceptual harmony. The result is often — sadly — a discrete congeries of individual essays, some meaningful, others less so, without a unifying *raison d'etre.* All of which usually justifies the habitual practice of skipping about, randomly choosing this or that more or less interesting piece, ignoring the bulk. In an era in which "information" mindlessly proliferates, in which the rate of publications soars in a seemingly unconscious attempt to compensate for failings of quality through quantitative excess (thus, the academic ethos of "publish or perish" turns into its opposite, *compelling* the mediocrity it purportedly desires to weed out),[1] it is not surprising that the genre of anthology has enjoyed such 'success.'

It is heartening to report that the anthology under review is free of the foregoing detriments. Instead, *Lukács Revalued* represents (along with Arato and Breines's *The Young Lukács and the Origins of Western Marxism*)[2] what is undoubtedly the single most vaulable volume to have appeared on Lukács to date. Each of the eight essays which comprise the work contains original perspectives and insights on a particular phase of Lukács's theoretical development. All measure up to exceedingly high standards of intellectual depth and rigor. But perhaps the most significant advantage of the volume is that despite representing the views of six different authors, a remarkable degree of thematic coherence pervades the study; the latter is not merely attributable to the subject matter they share, but rather owes more to a theoretical framework held in common. Of course, this shared perspective — which it will be the task of this review to spell out — is by no

1. For an interesting perspective on this phenomenon, see Russell Jacoby, "A Falling Rate of Intelligence," *Telos* 27 (Spring 1976), pp. 141-146.

2. Two other commendable studies of the Young Lukács which have appeared recently merit acknowledgement: Michael Lowy's *Georg Lukács*: From Romanticism to Bolshevism (London, 1981), which, despite a penetrating typology of "romantic anti-capitalist" intellectuals culminating in a provocative discussion of Thomas Mann's revolutionary ascetic monk Naptha (in *Magic Mountain*) as a prototypical embodiment of this character type, is vitiated by a justification of Lukács' "oppositional Leninism" (for a review of this work and that of Arato and Breines, by Ferenc Feher, see *New German Critique* 23, pp. 131-140); and Andrew Feenberg, *Lukács, Marx, and the Sources of Critical Theory* (Totowa, N.J., 1981).

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means fortuitous. The authors are all members of the "Budapest School" (though three, Heller, Feher, and Markus, now live in Australia), most of whom are themselves former students of Lukács.[3] Nevertheless, the conceptual thread that unites the inidividual contributions is anything but hagiographic. Their attitude toward the Master — author of what is unquestionably the most significant treatise on dialetics to have appeared since Marx's day: *History and Class Consciousness* — is consistently critical (yet in a highly constructive manner), and at times — especially when it is Lukács' final work, the *Ontology,* that is under consideration — unsparingly so. Yet, despite the significant theoretical divergences that emerge as the debates progress, the point of view forever uniting 'mentor' and 'disciples' is perhaps most eloquently formulated by the 'disciples' in the following passage: "Georg Lukács firmly believed in the truth of his standpoint, and yet when we claimed the truth for our side and outlined our views, which were opposed to his decisive respects, he accepted them as justified *though* contestable. The basic intellectual attitude we shared, summed up in the term 'revolutionary tolerance,' uncompromisingly rejects every perspective that does not seek a liberated human race or regards this 'regulative idea' as an obsolete illusion of this century and feels no duty toward it" (137). It is deep-seated allegiance to this admirable yet fragile 'regulative idea' that imbues the spirit in which all the essays in *Lukács Revalued* were conceived, an ideal that is the fundamental bequest of the Lukácsian legacy, and one which confers an enormous degree of *Aktualität* or contemporary relevance on the contributions in this volume.

The essays themselves are ordered so as to follow the chronology of Lukács' own intellectual development; so that in series they combine to form a sort of *Bildungsroman* — or, as it seems at times, a *Bildungsroman* in reverse. All periods of his intellectual acitivity are treated with remarkable thoroughness; with the notable exception of the period of composition of *History and Class Consciousness* (1919-1923).[4] Undoubtedly the editor felt that this was a phase of Lukács' development that had received fairly exhaustive scrutiny in the last ten years, rendering a direct discussion of this work expendable. Yet, it is unquestionably the critical philosophical perspective launched by *History and Class Consciousness* — minus the absolute guarantee of the proletariat as the identical subject-object of history — that is the guiding theoretical animus of all the contributions.

The collection begins with two superb, probing studies of the pre-Marxist Lukács: György Markus' "Life and Soul: The Young Lukács and the Problem of Culture" and Agnes Heller's "Georg Lukács and Irma Seidler." To reinvoke the metaphor of *Bildungsroman* in reverse: upon reading these two contributions, one comes away with the visceral impression that these were the finest years of Lukács' creative life. These were the years (1910-1918) of Lukács the "romantic anti-capitalist,"[5] of the transcendentally homeless *Kulturmensch* cast adrift in a Fichtean era of "absolute sinfulness," who desperately sought a way out of the "charnel house of dead interiorities" that was capitalism in terms of a wide range of solutions derived from the sphere of "aesthetic

3. For an account of the intellectual heritage of this group, see Agnes Heller, "Marxist Ethics and Eastern Europe," *Telos* 38 (Winter 1978-79), pp. 153-174.

4. The only essay in which *History and Class Consciousness* is discussed in any detail is Mihaly Vajda's "Lukács and Husserl." Yet, even here, as we shall see, the status of the work is seriously questioned.

5. For a fuller explanation of the hermeneutic significance of this category as applied to the young Lukács, see Ferenc Feher's essay, "The Last Phase of Romantic Anti-Capitalism," *New German Critique* 18 (Spring-Summer 1979).

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culture"; tremendously prolific years which saw the publication of *A History of the Development of Modern Drama* (1911),[6] *Soul and Form* (1910), *Aesthetic Culture* (1913), and *Theory of the Novel* (1916); not to mention the composition of two significant aesthetic fragments, the *Heidelberger Philosophie der Kunst* (1912-14) and the *Heidelberger Ästhetik* (1916-17).

It is the Lukács of the 'essay period' (1908-1911) in which all the essays that would ultimately be published in *Soul and Form* and *Aesthetic Culture* were composed, and, to a lesser extent, the Lukács of the *Drama History* that Markus focuses on in his opening essay.[7] In this phase Lukács established the theoretical problematic that would preoccupy him until his 'conversion' to Bolshevism in 1918: the oscillation between an existential-metaphysical and socio-historical explanation for the crisis of civilization, which consists in the seemingly unbridgeable dichotomy between 'form' and 'life.' As Markus observes: "The whole of Lukács' pre-Marxist period was a constant struggle to arrive at a precise conceptual diagnosis of these contradictions, this 'crisis,' and to discover, by theoretical means, ways out of them, or at least the norms of proper human conduct appropriate to dealing with them" (4).

Lukács' own description of the existential tenor of this 'crisis' is vividly set forth in a memorable passage from *Soul and Form*:"Life is an anarchy of light and shadow. Nothing ever reaches an end; new, bewildering voices constantly join in the chaos of earlier sounds. Everything flows and flows together, wildly, in an impure mixture; everything is frustrated and destroyed. Nothing ever blooms into real life. Life means being able to live things to the full. In *this* life nothing is ever lived completely to the full. Life is the most unreal and lifeless form of being it is possible to imagine."[8]

Throughout his earlier years, Lukács explored a wide range of solutions to this dilemma of 'life's' imperviousness to the higher ideals of 'soul' and 'form.' In *Aesthetic Culture* (to this day available only in Hungarian), the existential judgment passed on life in *Soul and Form* is deemed insupportable: were the gap between 'culture' and 'life' absolutely unbridgeable, then life would be condemend to the status of a vast moral-teleological chaos. Yet, the solution set forth in 'aesthetic culture' — i.e., that of the artist as the creator of a 'formed totality' in which the fusion of subject and object denied in the sphere of material life is realized — is in its turn later rejected as exemplifying the 'Satanism' of art: for it creates an (aesthetic) *semblance* of harmony and fulfillment while denying the actualization of fulfillment in life itself (3). In *Theory of the Novel* two contrasting *immanentist* solutions are proposed: that of a small, closed circle of intimates, as represented by Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister,* and the prospect raised in Dostoevsky's novels of resurgence of the 'Russian soul,' untainted by the base influences of Western capitalist *Zivilisation*.[9] It is in this sense that Lukács suggests in the dramatic, concluding pages of the book that Dostoevsky no longer writes novels. These later 'immanentist' solutions developed by Lukács already point, in their rejection of the art-philosophical (*Kunstphilosophisch*) ideal of 'aesthetic culture,' toward the worldly overcoming of the bourgeois cultural crisis that Lukács saw embodied in the

6. This work has recently appeared in German translation under the title *Entwicklungsgeschichte des modernen Dramas* (Neuwied, 1981).

7. See also Markus' discussion of the *Heidelberger Ästhetik* in "*Seele und Leben,*" pp. 192-240.

8. *Soul and Form* (Cambridge, Mass., 1974), pp. 152-153. It is Lucien Goldmann in his *Lukács and Heidegger* (London, 1972), who has made the most of the existentialist leanings of the young Lukács.

9. For more on Lukács' early Slavophilism, see Arato and Breines, *op.cit.,* pp. 61-74. In an interview with Michael Lowy, Ernst Bloch explains the impact made by the Russian Revolution on Lukács in terms of its embodiment of the 'Russian idea." Cf. *New German Critique* 9.

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Russian Revolution; and hence they can be regarded as a critical stage in his intellectual transition from the viewpoint of bourgeois *Kulturkritik* to historical materialism. Yet, in his early 'essayistic' phase such prospects for a possible collectivist resolution of the cultural crisis were not yet envisioned. Only superior individuals could aspire to the height of 'peak experiences,' during which 'soul' and 'life' would become momentarily reconciled, resulting in the formation of an incipient, ever-so-fragile totality; nevertheless, given the contingencies of empirical life which incessantly threaten to engulf them, such instances of fulfillment could not help but be inherently ephemeral and fleeting. These were the new dynamics of the "Metaphysics of Tragedy,"[10] as Markus eloquently explains (14-15).

As suggested above, the competing tendency operative within Lukács' early work was a socio-historical account of the crisis of the West, the perspective which informs both his *Drama History* and *The Theory of the Novel* (although as Arato and Breines point out, the standpoint of the latter work is less socio-historical than historico-philosophical). In these works the hiatus between 'meaning' and 'life' is less an affliction of the 'human condition' than it is a product of the displacement of *Gemeinschaft* by *Gesellschaft*; and as such, it is the terminology and insights of the German neo-Kantian *Geisteswissenschaften* school (above all, the influence of Simmel and Weber) that color these writings. Hence, it is works of this nature, where explanations of the crisis in terms of the categories of 'reification,' 'rationalization,' and 'commodification' receive pride of place, which make his later transition to a materialist world view less of the absolute Kierkegaardian leap of faith it is as times portrayed as. This is the realization with which Markus concludes: "Seen in this light, Lukács' conversion to Marxism in 1918 was not a break, an irrational hiatus in the evolution of his ideas, but an attempt to find both a theoretical answer and a practical solution to the question that had, in the final analysis, fueled the whole of his early development" (21).

Agnes Heller's contribution, "George Lukács and Irma Seidler," which also treats, in more concentrated fashion, the 'essayistic phase,' is an unusually moving and powerful essay. Its subject matter is the intersection of 'life' and 'work': a set of circumstances resulting in an existential crisis of tremendous scope for the young Lukács, which ultimately compelled him to reject the smug standpoint of 'aesthetic culture' and the Kantian ethical stance that accompanied it.

During the composition of *Soul and Form* (1910, Lukács becomes acquainted wih the artist Irma Seidler, and a close bond begins to develop. However, Lukács, the writer, the creator, the philosopher, tries to defuse their intimacy: for him Irma represents the sphere of (mere) 'life': the realm of mundane duties and obligations reminiscent of Kierkegaard's 'ethical sphere.' 'Life' is the lowest sphere for Lukács's unabashedly aristocratic spiritual hierarchy, the higher two represented by 'works' (of the philosopher or artist) and pure 'goodness' (of the saint).[11] Lukács kept Irma at a distance for fear of contaminating his 'works' with 'life.' As such, he fell victim to a problem that preoccupied Thomas Mann: the (immoral) exploitation of individuals and life-situations by the artist for the sake of his or her art. This was the solution for which Lukács opted in his dealings with Irma. As Heller observes: "Lukács created his relationship with Irma Seidler through his philosophical 'I'; *he aligned his life with the truth of philosophy.*" And

10. Cf. the essay in "Soul and Form" of this title, pp. 152-174.

11. For an amplification of this hierarchy of 'spiritual castes,' see a related essay by Agnes Heller, "Von der Armut am Geiste: A Dialogue by the Young Lukács," *Philosophical Forum* (Spring-Summer 1972), pp. 360-370. Heller's essay is an introduction to Lukács' own dialogue "On the Poverty of Spirit," which appears on pp. 371-385 of the same issue.

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ultimately, like the return of the repressed, 'life' (or in this case, death) would return to revenge itself on philosophy, which would itself undergo a transformation in consequence of the (belated) confrontation.

The conflict at issue is of course suggestive of Kierkegaard's relationship to Regine Olsen — which is the theme of Lukács' second essay in *Soul and Form* (the volume as a whole is dedicated to Irma Seidler). Lukács quotes Rudolph Kassner: "Kierkegaard created his relationship with Regine Olsen"; that is, he turned it into a wealth of symbolic material for his work. Georg Lukács attempted to do the same in his relationship with Irma Seidler, and it backfired horrifically. The end result had less to do with the difference between Kierkegaard and Lukács than with the difference between the two women, explains Heller. Whereas Olsen was able to take the rejection by Kierkegaard in stride, to marry soon after and rest content with a 'bourgeois' life, Seidler, the artist, was not. Irma, like Lukács himself, had early on rejected the stultifying conformity of bourgeois convention and chose a different course: suicide.

Hence, Lukács, protective of the purity of his philosophical stance, refuses to speak to Irma in terms that would be comprehensible. As Heller recounts: "Personal feelings are not articulated in the conventional significations; they *gain their significance through Lukács' philosophy,* from a philosophy whose essence — and system of categories — is inaccessible to Irma. Every word becomes ambiguous, every sentence equivocal. Desire loses its object; the I becomes a construct; making oneself understood turns into its opposite. The more Lukács wished to reveal an I to Irma, the deeper, the more impenetrable his incognito becomes" (36). Lukács tried to authenticate his own philosophical posture through the use of Irma as a means; whereas Irma wanted to be loved. Heller's indictment: "Whoever makes himself the object of his consciousness in the 'era of absolute culpability' is over-refined. *Theory absorbs the senses*" (219); and the substance ebbs out of life.

Lukács' aloofness, his rejection of Irma as representative of 'life,' his bad faith in the sphere of human relations, has its immense costs: not just his relationship with Irma, but her life as well. She too assumed a spiritual course in life by becomng an artist; yet not, like Lukács, *at the expense of life.* She desired to be an artist *and* a woman, and as Heller explains, "This double fealty, fealty to womanhood and fealty to creative human existence, cause her tragedy because if she could not *be both at once,* then she preferred *not to be*" (54).

The entire series of events left Lukács profoundly shaken, precipitating an existential crisis of immense magnitude. His immediate intellectual response to these circumstances was the dialogue "Of Poverty in Spirit,"[12] in which the 'philosopher,' filled with remorse for the loss of a loved one whose suicide he might have prevented, takes his own life. Yet in this fictive scenario, it is not so much the loss of a loved one per se that spurs the philosopher to suicide, but, more importantly, the unbearable awareness of his own 'spiritual poverty' in his abstract negation of life in favor of 'works.' The upshot of this experience for Lukács was a dramatic renunciation of the 'aestheticism' of *Soul and Form,* a rejection of the standpoint of 'aesthetic culture' and the existence of the 'beautiful soul' corresponding to it, where the man of culture subsists in the ethereal world of forms and belles lettres while the rest of empirical life is allowed to languish in shambles; but also in the rejection of a (Kantian) moral standpoint whose ethical formalism allows the morally acting subject to persist in a state of smug indifference *vis-à-vis* the outcome of his actions in the (contingent) domain of empirical reality.

12. *Ibid.*

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In her superior analysis of these events, located at the crossroads between 'life' and 'work,' Agnes Heller has gone far toward illuminating a chapter in Lukács' intellectual biography that is of inestimable significance. For it would seem fair to conclude that only as a result of having suffered through the trauma of Irma Seidler's death (at one point Lukács remarks: "I have lost my right to life" [34]) did Lukács gain the courage to surmount the aestheticist posture of the essay period and feel impelled to search for an 'immanent' rather than 'transcendent' way out of the cultural crisis at hand. The immediate result of these efforts were the aforementioned solutions in *Theory of the Novel* (originally the first chapter of a longer book on Dostoevsky), which were concomitant with the development of the Heidelberg aesthetics (1912-1917). However, the longer term significance of the intense intellectual soul-searching he underwent meant a new receptivity to the possibilities involved in a socio-historical resolution of the crisis. In the last analysis, then, "Georg Lukács and Irma Seidler" recounts an indispensable chapter of the saga leading to Lukács' discovery of historical materialism.

The next three essays deal with what might be labeled the 30-year transition period between Lukács' early and late phases (1920-1950). Two of them deal with his relation to specific figures of comparable stature (Radnoti's essay on Lukács and Bloch, and Vajda's piece on Lukács and Husserl); and the other, by Ferenc Feher, deals extensively with what some have referred to as Lukács' Stalinist phase.

The philosophical alliance between Lukács and Bloch in the 1910s is well documented;[13] yet Radnoti's erudite discussion of their intellectual affinities and differences raises the state of the literature on these two thinkers to a new level of conceptual clarity. According to Bloch's account,[14] the proximity between them was so great that they were forced to create an artificial preserve for the sake of accentuating their differences.

How then does one begin to characterize these differences in the 1910s? Radnoti hazards an initial solution to this problem in terms of the suggestive formulation: "religion versus ethics." Yet the serviceability of this distinction, convenient as it may be, fades upon closer scrutiny; for though Bloch's thought draws much of its messianic promise from explicitly religious sources, the ethical presuppositions which ground this standpoint are equally indispensable; thus the famous injunction in *Geist der Utopie* that the historically appropriate form of ethical conduct in today's world is that of "the categorical imperative with revolver in hand." And in Lukács' case, while ethical considerations often gain pride of place, his existential point of departure is essentially the "god-forsaken world" that is also Bloch's starting point. In the last analysis, both men shared the same fundamental, nagging eschatological longings: in the case of Lukács it was a longing for totality, in that of Bloch, for "utopia." Both sought fervently after paths of redemption amid the debris of a fractured totality, an unredeemed world.

Indeed, often one gets the feeling from reading the two that they are so close in outlook that they are forced to magnify artificially their points of disagreement in order to keep their respective perspectives from collapsing into one. Thus, in the debates surrounding *Geist der Utopie* and *History and Class Consciousness,* Lukács, in the latter work, irreverently lumps Bloch among the "correctors" of historical materialism who believe they can "improve upon" Marx by going beyond him (a critique that would, e.g., be correctly directed at the Austro-Marxist neo-Kantians). Radnoti is quick to

13. See both the reminiscences of Paul Honigsheim, *On Max Weber* (New York, 1968), and Marianne Weber, *Max Weber* (New York, 1974), both of which deal with the participation of Bloch and Lukács in Weber's famous Heidelberg Sunday discussion *Kreis*.

14. Cf. the interview with Michael Lowy cited in note 9 above.

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come to Bloch's defense on the grounds that for the latter, unlike the various specialists to whom such a critique would be more properly addressed, "every idea and every emotion is aimed against the existing world" (67). A point well taken which, however, in the connection at hand seems to land wide of the mark: Bloch *did* in fact see as early as 1918 the need to supplement Marxist determinism with a 'warmer current' — hence, he held that the incorporation of a *transcendent* perspective — i.e., one that refused to perceive the world in solely *mechanistic* terms — was an indispenable complement if Marxism were not to degenerate into another symptom of the disease — reification — which it desired to cure; which is essentially a fairly accurate indictment of the state of Social Democratic Marxism in 1918. Thus, Bloch did in fact envision a need to go *beyond* Marxism as it had been historically constituted from 1890-1914; and in this sense he was unquestionably correct. The irony here is that Lukács too perceived the necessity of going beyond the historically given varieties of historical materialism; yet, he preferred to view his efforts more in terms of a 'restoration of the authentic Marx' rather than a heretical supersession; whereas in Bloch's materialist eschatology, 'heresy' was a positive category.

A parallel misinterpretation, only with the terms now reversed, distinguishes Bloch's 1924 review of *History and Class Consciousness*.[15] Here, Lukács' work, whose brilliant and equally heretical comprehension of the essential philosophical rudiments of historical materialism was censured by Comintern functionaries Zinoviev and Deborin, is carelessly lumped among those representatives of the 'cold current' in Marxism, insofar as it reduced the complexities of the emancipatory process to a set of functionalist socio-economic determinants. Another instance of artificially manufactured differences in order to offset overpowering similarities.

The question recurs, therefore: wherein lay the essential differences? For one, Bloch polemicizes repeatedly in *Geist der Utopie* against the 'aristocratism' of Lukács' early position (as Radnoti astutely points out, in "On Poverty of Spirit" Lukács speaks of spiritual castes; only certain of these prove capable of reaching a fulfilled existence); whereas Bloch's religiously inspired utopia is in principle radically democratic. Moreover, Radnoti continues, their views of the role of art in the process of world transformation are fundamentally at odds: once he had rejected the aestheticism of *Soul and Form*, for Lukács the formed totality of the work of art is merely an impotent phantasm when set against the impoverishment of empirical existence; whereas for Bloch, works of art are legitimated as *Vorscheine,* anticipatory projections of reconciled life. Yet, as Radnoti indicates, Bloch is less interested in art as art than in its subordination to the aforesaid 'functional' ends, or its philosophical significance for this process. In *Geist der Utopie*, he summarizes his views on art as follows: "More important than that the outsiders hear the song when a man screams in the hot belly of the Pharsalian bull and still more important than the mechanism by which his screams, transformed into song, are transmitted, are the screams themselves, their undiverted genuineness and depth" (71).

Yet, these early differences, often exaggeratedly formulated by Bloch in *Geist der Utopie*, fades when Lukács himself undergoes his 'conversion' in 1918. Both men had always been struggling toward the same end: the surmounting of the contingent sphere of immediate experience in the direction of the fulfillment of a form-governed, meaningful cosmos; henceforth they were moving toward it on parallel tracks.

"Lukács in Weimar," the title of Feher's essay, is of course intended metaphorically, with reference to Lukács' partisanship for the era of German classicism as an aesthetic

15. See Ernst Bloch, "Aktualität und Utopie. Zu Lukács' *Geschichte und Klassenbewusstsein*," in *Philosophische Aufsätze* (Frankfurt, 1969), pp. 600 ff.

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canon after his renunciation of *History and Class Consciousness* and alliance with the land of 'really existing socialism' — Lukács' Hegelian 'reconciliation with reality.' For Lukács, this stance meant an unrelenting embrace of Western rationalism in face of the resurgence of cultural, political, and philosophical irrationalism which culminated in the Nazi era. However, as Feher aptly demonstrates, this attitude led to a certain intellectual rigidity on Lukács' part. As Feher expresses it: "Lukács literally lost his sensitivity to the new radical cultural possibilities" (78), a fact which emerges with painful clarity in the famous 'expressionism debate' of the 1930s with Bloch and Brecht.[16] Yet, it must be pointed out at the same time that Lukács hardly became a party functionary and refused to acquiesce in face of the Zhdanovite doctrine of socialist realism; instead, Lukács spoke out in favor of 'critical realism,' as represented by 19th-century novelists such as Stendhal, Balzac, and Tolstoy. Feher is thoroughly critical of the aristocratism and essentialism of Lukács' aesthetic standpoint, his insensitivity to the position of the recipient of aesthetic objectifications (and in this failing both of the previous two charges are readily apparent: it is the philosophical critic himself who becomes the arbiter, the sole recipient as it were, of works of art, who determined whether or not they are in the last analysis 'essential' or 'decadent'). Yet, despite all the difficult choices Lukács was faced with during the inter-war period, and the at times ignominious decisions he fell victim to in retrospect, Feher astutely points out, with a keen sense of dialectical balance, what must simultaneously be recognized as his intellectual courage in an era of darkness: "I cannot hide my admiration for Lukács' obstinate resistance to his own epoch. It was an irrevocable philosophical act to defend the primogeniture of free personality as a *causa sui*, as the product of his own activity within a framework of a genuine democrcy, in the age of Hitler's and Stalin's witches' sabbath, to defend the unity of the personality against its disintegration *en masse,* to advocate principles of harmony and substantiality as those of social sanity, in terms of a theory of personality, in an age in which laments about the shallowness, the amorphous quality of personality were widespread and in which the statement of its being a fact was transformed into various techniques of the *radicalisation du mal*" (91).

To be sure, there are many points of concordance between the Lukács of *History and and Class Consciousness* and Husserl of the *Crisis*, and Vajda has done a superb job of highlighting them. Above all, their respective critiques of Western rationalism and scientism converge. For Husserl, the 'fall' occurs with Galileo's 'mathematization' of the universe, a project that modern philosophy on the whole identifies with profoundly; for Lukács, rationalism represents a progressive attempt to compensate for the growing irrationality of bourgeois society through the creation of a 'palace of ideas.' Both tie the crisis of the West to shortcomings in the paradigm of Western reason; although for Husserl, such shortcomings are explained as an autonomous cultural phenomenon, whereas for Lukács, following the Marxian method of ideology-critique, the cultural crisis itself has its origins in that of bourgeois society itself. Yet, the major difference between them lies in their conceptions of how to break out of the crisis; for Husserl it is a question of idealistically recapturing the lost *telos* of Western philosophy as the guiding 'queen of the sciences,' the status it enjoyed with the Greeks; Lukács of course opts for a materialist solution: the self-recognition of the proletariat as the identical subject-object of history. Vajda attempts to overly downplay the differences between the two on this point, by claiming that Husserl's emphasis on the emotional side also entails the "unity of thought and action" and therefore fails to

16. For an in-depth survey of these controversies, see the superb work by Eugene Lunn, *Marxism and Modernism* (Berkeley, 1982).

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lapse into "merely a new contemplative attitude" (111). While this is perhaps nominally the case, it is difficult to see how Husserl's approach, despite the incisiveness of its critical standpoint, can in its practical implications avoid becoming merely one more abstract philosophical appeal to a 'higher' form of rationality. Vajda's insight may be confirmed, however, in the obverse sense — that is, on Husserl's rather than Lukács' terrain; something he hints at when he opines: "each standpoint is ultimately formulated as 'the philosopher's' " (113). For once, Lukács' potential subject-object identity is shown to be historically incapable of transcending the standpoint of empirical class consciousness — or reification — his claim to superiority can no longer rely on the immanent logic of socio-historical forces, but must, like Husserl's, also rely on the force of better moral argument.

At this point in the argument, Vajda's reflections on the theoretical projects of the two seems to undergo a subtle yet striking reversal. For in Lukács' approach there exists the ever-present danger that once the interests of the species in emncipation is identified *tout court* with a mythologized proletariat (the historical embodiment of humanity's species-being), the interests of the individual will be *totally absorbed by those of the species.* There is no need to recount the manifold historical instances of the abuse of 'species-prerogative' in this century, instances with which Vajda is only too familiar. Hence, there emerges in the end an *openness* in Husserl's formulation of the critical problematic that is lacking in Lukács. This is the sober insight with which Vajda leaves us, a critique of Lukács as a philosopher of (and of Marxism as a philosophy of) identity: "Philosophy's belief in its ability to suppress its own particularity, and thus every other particularity as well, is a new false consciousness, the attainment of which would result in just as much cruelty and inhumanity as that caused by false objectivism. . . . A total reorientation, replacing objectivism with holism and effecting a repression of individuality, would not solve the crisis of mankind. The crisis can be overcome only *by developing the social character of the individual*" (121).

The last three essays of the anthology are concerned with Lukács' later philosophy, in particular with his *Ontology of Social Being.* Here one gains insight into a tenuous scenario in which pupils must confront the theories of their beloved mentor, theories toward which they are not especially sympathetically disposed. Respect for Lukács requires that their criticisms remain slightly muted; yet the fundamental nature of the philosophical disagreements at issue are conveyed unequivocally. The paradoxical result of this situation was a confrontation between a standpoint close to the 'philosophy of praxis' embodied in *History and Class Consciousness* and that of the author of the latter work, who had long since renounced it, and had ironically moved in his later years toward a position whose inflexibilities were startlingly close to the received version of Marxism he had so effectively exposed in 1923. Some of the main objections to the new work concerned Lukács' (1) flirtation with ideas reminiscent of the notion of a 'dialectic of nature'; (2) return to a 'copy' theory of knowledge and belittlement of epistemological questions in general; (3) insistence on the idea of historical progress as a necessary category of the materialist legacy; (4) adherence to the idea that there existed socio-historical laws which operated independently of human volition. I think that the fundamental incommensurability of the theoretical implications of such a position when contrasted with that of *History and Class Consciousness* cannot help but strike anyone familiar with the revolution in Marxist philosophy precipated by the latter work.

As damning as the criticisms of Heller, Feher, Markus and Vajda are, the critical discourse reaches a qualitatively new pitch in the "Metacritical Letter" of Gaspar Tamas, for whom the "dimensions of the failure in the *Ontology* are gigantic" (155). With

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unmitigated forthrightness, Tamas shows how Lukács has rendered all elements of human volition, consciousness, value, and choice meaningless by transferring their determinants unilaterally into the dogmatic substrate of sheer 'Being.' For Tamas, in no uncertain terms, it is Stalinist *Diamat* that is the structural basis of the *Ontology*; and he demonstrates with conviction that Lukács' neoscholastic attempt to ground freedom, universality, etc., in 'Being' runs against the grain of the entire 'Renaissance of Marxism' in the 1960s, focusing on Marxism as a philosophy of praxis and a critique of alienation; a 'Renaissance' whose ultimate source of inspiration was none other than the Hegelian Marxist Georg Lukács of 1923.

In her concluding essay, "Lukács' Later Philosophy," Agnes Heller attempts to present a more balanced portrait of Lukács' position in his later years. His later philosophy seems to oscillate between, on the one hand, a partisanship for critical rationality and, on the other, a dogmatic belief that the 'absolute' had already made its definitive appearance with the thought of Karl Marx. As Heller notes incisively, for Lukács there was no way out of this theoretical vicious circle: "the struggle *against* myth and *for* rationality is being conducted . . . from the standpoint of myth" (181).

The lesson the students had learned better than their teacher — yet, ironically, also *from* the teacher — was that when it ceases to reflect on its own theoretical foundation and congeals into a dogma, Marxism regresses to the level of myth; and in the name of myth have been committed some of the worst crimes of our century.

One can see in retrospect that the metaphor used earlier to describe Lukács' intellectual development — that of a *Bildungsroman* in reverse — does not quite hold. Certainly advances were made in the course of his development that would have been well-nigh impossible from his pre-Marxist standpoint. Here, one need only invoke the brilliant critique of reification in *History and Class Consciousness* (undoubtedly the aspect of the work that remains most alive today); however, in the same work one finds the mythologized image of the proletariat, so effectively unmasked in Vajda's contribution. Or, one might cite the courageous defense of standards of rationality amid the twin horrors of Nazism and Stalinism; yet, it is Agnes Heller who describes one of the chief works of this period, *The Destruction of Reason*, as a "demonology" (179). Or, one might allude to the understanding of works of art in *The Specificity of the Aesthetic* as the locus where universality or 'species-character' and individuality intersect; art hence becomes the standpoint from which the apparent universality of fetishism can be transcended in the here and now, the authentic historical memory of mankind; yet, the later aesthetic writings remain wedded to the limited understanding of works of art as essentially 'mimetic' (and thus they are consigned to the function of 'reflecting' a more primary substraum of being; a socio-historical substratum); and they are moreover inseparable from Lukács' infamous wholesale condemnation of the 'decadence' of aesthetic modernism.

In pointing out a wealth of subtleties and complexities in Lukács' extraordinarily rich intellectual development, *Lukács Revealed* raises the debate concerning his legacy to a new level of theoretical sophistication. It is a book that is not only likely to stand as a watershed for future discussions of Lukács' contemporary relevance, but the probing character of its individul contributions suggests a more universal significance with respect to present-day controversies over the status of historical materialism itself.

Richard Wolin

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